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VOLUME LXV, NUMBER 19478

FRIDAY, JANUARY 10, 1997 • SHEVAI 27:57 • 2 RAMADAN, 1417



Police with sniffer dogs patrol the area near the old Tel Aviv central bus station where two bombs exploded last night.

12 injured in TA bomb blasts

PM: Almost certainly a terror attack

TWELVE people were injured last night in an apparent terror attack when two small bombs exploded in garbage cans in the old Tel Aviv Central Bus Station.

However, police and security forces have not entirely ruled out criminal motives in the explosions, which occurred at 8:25 p.m. and 8:40 p.m.

All the injured were taken to Tel Aviv's Ichilov and Wolfson hospitals. Two people with light injuries were at Wolfson, while at Ichilov there 10 people were hospitalized, two with moderate injuries. One of the injured was in the operating room late last night. Two policemen were slightly injured.

Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu left his meeting with US Middle East peace envoy Dennis Ross at the Defense Ministry, a few kilometers away from the attack, and went to Ichilov Hospital to visit the injured.

Israel needs to find out the facts before ascertaining blame for the two explosions, but "it seems that almost for sure it was a terrorist action," Netanyahu told reporters at the hospital last night.

The prime minister said the basis for his assumption that it was

RAINE MARCUS

a terrorist attack is a belief that if it was the work of organized crime, the explosions would have been targeted to demolish a store or car.

Netanyahu said if it turns out that the blast was the work of terrorists and that these perpetrators operated out of the Palestinian Authority, then Israel "will react with severity." However, he refused to spell out anything else before knowing the facts.

Netanyahu refused to speculate about how the incident would affect the peace talks, and noted that during those discussions, he "raised different ideas" on how to advance peace.

PA leader Yasser Arafat was updated about the attack, but a spokesman said he would not comment on it until the origins of the attack were clarified.

The explosions occurred on Neveh Sha'an'an Street, one of the city's most crowded places, on a night when stores, fruit and vegetable stalls, and kiosks were still serving customers.

Both bombs were improvised and contained only small amounts of explosives, and exploded with-

in 50 meters from each other.

After the first explosion, police, soldiers and Magen David Adom ambulances were alerted. As two policemen arrived to check the garbage can, they were injured by the second explosion in another nearby bin.

Massive reinforcements of police, IDF soldiers, security forces, sappers and medical personnel arrived on the scene and evacuated residents and store owners. Sappers combed the area and surrounding streets for possible additional bombs, but after two hours of searching, none was found.

Internal Security Minister Avigdor Kahalani also arrived to inspect the scene.

"We have had warnings for some time, and have been on full alert," said Kahalani. "The explosives used in the improvised bombs were a small amount, and luckily no one was killed."

One Arab worker was held for questioning last night, but it was still not clear if he was connected in any way to the incident. At present, hardly any Arab workers are employed at the bus station.

One eyewitness, Itzik, was buy-

(Continued on Page 17)

US compromise proposal calls for final IDF pullback in '98

THE US compromise proposal for the completion of three future IDF pullbacks in the West Bank, which has not been accepted by the Palestinians, avoided a specific date but said it should be done "at some point during 1998," a US official said yesterday.

"We didn't give a month," he said. Talks between Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu and special Middle East peace envoy Dennis Ross were interrupted last night due to the two explosions in south Tel Aviv last night. Plans for a US-Palestinian meeting at the Herzliya home of US ambassador Martin Indyk were also apparently canceled, since this meeting was at least to minimally relay Netanyahu's response on the date issue after the meeting with Ross. There was a US-Palestinian meeting early in the day yesterday. Arafat heads to Paris for a couple days today, but US officials say that Ross has no plans to leave.

The US has been seeking a compromise between Palestinian Authority leader Yasser Arafat's demand that the pullback be completed by September and Netanyahu's insistence

DAVID MAKOVSKY and JON IMMANUEL

that it be done by the end of the interim period which concludes in the spring of 1999. This issue of the pullback dates has been holding up the signing of the Hebron agreement.

Apparently, Arafat has interpreted the US proposal of 1998 as meaning a pullback at the very end of the year.

In a meeting with Peace Now and Meretz members in Gaza, two participants said that Arafat spoke about the end of the year. Janet Aviad, a leading Peace Now activist, cited Arafat as telling the group that "the American compromise idea was December '98."

There seemed to be room for hope for a compromise yesterday, as Aviad said Arafat suggested that December 1998 "was too distant," yet she said that Arafat did not say that a September 1997 date was an ultimatum.

However, Arafat did say that he interpreted the three pullbacks to mean that Israel would be obligated to turn over no less than "80 percent" of the West Bank by the end of the pull-

backs.

According to Oslo II, three redeployments involve Israel pulling back to settlements and to undefined "specified military locations."

In the meeting, Arafat was also insistent that Israel and the Palestinians agree as part of a Hebron deal that there be "a liaison officer" at Machpela Cave, Aviad relayed. She said that Arafat was no longer insisting upon "a police presence." One idea which has been floating around would be to create a liaison relationship between an existing Wakf watchman and the joint IDF-PA coordinating committee in Hebron.

Arafat noted his position as a vice-chairman of the Islamic Conference, saying that the position ensured that he needed to stand up for Moslem rights.

Aviad said Arafat also rebuffed a questioner who suggested that Netanyahu was not a peace partner. Specifically, Arafat said that the prime minister's positions have progressed since his election campaign, and therefore he is hopeful of progress, but "we will see."

(Continued on Page 17)

Full alert in security zone following fatal attack

DAVID RUDGE

IDF and South Lebanese Army troops remained on full alert yesterday in the security zone, as tension remained high in the region following heavy fighting on Wednesday in which an IDF soldier was killed and eight were wounded. At least one Katyusha rocket hit western Galilee.

The Grapes of Wrath monitoring committee is to convene today to discuss Israel's complaint over the rocket attack, the second on the same region in three weeks.

No organization has admitted responsibility for Wednesday night's incident nor for the previous attack on December 13. Israel blames the Lebanese government for failing to prevent flagrant breaches of the understandings, to which it is a party, that ended the cross-border fighting during Operation Grapes of Wrath last April.

Hizbullah itself denied any involvement in the two attacks. Uri Lubrani, the government's coordinator on Lebanon, told *The Jerusalem Post* yesterday that there were several possibilities. He stressed, however, that "very little happens in the areas north of the zone from where Katyushas are fired at us without Hizbullah, in one way or another, being aware or involved in it."

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Biton buried with brother-in-arms, Page 2

The rocket attack followed a clash Wednesday afternoon between Nahal Brigade troops on ambush duty in the Taibeh region of the zone and a squad of gunmen from the Amal Shi'ite

movement.

St.-Sgt. Ori Biton, 21, of Moshav Yafir in Samaria, was killed in the clash and five of his comrades were wounded. Biton was laid to rest in the military section of the Kedumim cemetery yesterday afternoon alongside the grave of a close friend who was also killed in action in south Lebanon seven months before. Hundreds of people attended the funeral.

Three of the gunmen from the Amal squad were killed in the clash. Their bodies were removed from the field yesterday by troops from UNIFIL's Finnish battalion at the request of the families.

UNIFIL officers said that IDF soldiers who were at the scene yesterday morning fired warning shots at the Finnish soldiers who left the scene, but returned later to recover the bodies.

(Continued on Page 17)

Mahane Yehuda crash lifts lid on child labor

JON IMMANUEL

WHEN the 15-year-old refugee-camp boy pressed the wrong pedal and crashed a car into a crowd of people by Jerusalem's vegetable market this week, he assumed he was old enough to drive a few feet. Why not? He was old enough to work more than 12 hours a day and had earned his family's bread since he was 13.

His job took him all around Mahane Yehuda and the surround-

ing streets. He met all kinds of people while carrying crates, delivering orders, unloading vegetables, doing the odd jobs that adults found menial, including moving neighbors' cars.

Traditionally, a place of the most extreme anti-Arab opinions, it is a second home to dozens of Arab kids. Marwan (not his real name) enjoyed it a great deal more than he enjoyed school. He earned his keep. It was his idea to go to work, said his mother Aysha. His father

Ahmed was sick, his three older brothers were studying in high

school or college and could not legally work in Jerusalem anyway. "He was a good student, but had a problem with his Arabic teacher. He said, 'Let me leave school now. Then I can earn money for you and pay for high school.' His

wages keep the family." Working in Israel is limited to those over 28 who have two chil-

(Continued on Page 17)

NY stocks hit new high on mild inflation data

NEW YORK (AP) — Stocks rallied with bonds yesterday, catapulting the Dow Jones industrial average to a new high, amid news that inflation has remained tame despite the recent flurry of robust economic data.

On Wall Street, the Dow rose 76.19 points to close at 6,625.67, after jumping nearly 108 points as interest rates sank in the bond market. NYSE volume totaled \$54.12 million shares as of 4 p.m., vs. \$56.57 million in the previous session.

Full story, Page 14

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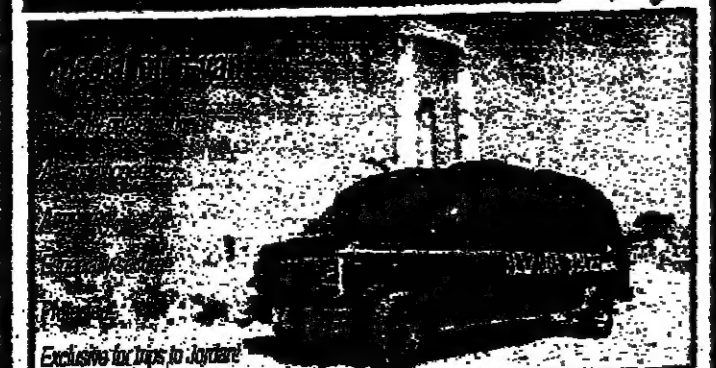


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Friedman: I'd be happy to share Amir's cell

PVT. NOAM Friedman, who fired on Arab shoppers in the Hebron market last week, had his remand extended for another 10 days yesterday by Central District Military Court in Jaffa.

The prosecution said that in his confession to Military Police, Friedman said "he regretted that he had not succeeded in killing anyone" during

his shooting spree.

"I don't see any justification for my arrest," Friedman told reporters before the hearing yesterday. "In the end, what I did was for the liberation of the holy city of Hebron."

Friedman also said that he would be happy to sit in prison alongside Yigal Amir.

Friedman's attorney Naftali Werzberger stepped down from the case yesterday, saying Friedman had refused to be evaluated by a psychiatrist.

"We think the accused must undergo psychiatric evaluation," Werzberger told Army Radio. "He does not want to do this. Under

these circumstances, it is not possible to represent him and to serve as a mouthpiece for his will which, in our opinion is not his real will, but rather a will that stems from psychological problems."

Werzberger said Friedman had been hospitalized in the past for psychiatric problems, and that

the claim was "real and not just a defense ploy."

The court appointed a new defense attorney. Central command prosecutor Avner Ya'acobi said the investigation of Friedman would be completed in a few days, and he was likely to be charged with attempted murder and injuring others. (Iim)

Soldier who died in Lebanon buried next to friend

Jerusalem Post Staff

ORI Biton, who was killed Wednesday in a clash with Hizbullah fighters, was buried yesterday, next to the grave of his closest friend, Yishai Shechter. Shechter died in action in Lebanon last June. Israel Radio's Shelly Yehimovich spoke with Yishai Shechter's mother, Sarah, about the friendship between the two soldiers.

Yehimovich: Ori will be buried beside Yishai?

Shechter: Ori welcomed Yishai into Samaria. When we got to Kedumim from Har Bracha, Ori was the one who took him in and became his friend. Yishai became one of the family, a true, true friend. (Continued on Page 18)



Staff Sgt. Ori Biton

(IDF Spokesman)

NEWSLINE with URI LUBRANI Government coordinator on Lebanon

Who does Israel hold responsible for the Katyusha rocket attack on western Galilee on Wednesday night?

All of this is originating from Lebanon. We have understandings in place and a monitoring group. In the case of the Katyusha attack we have to address the blame on the Lebanese government, which claims it is responsible for whatever happens in its territory and is also part of the monitoring group. The matter falls fairly and squarely in its (Lebanese government) court.

Is the Grapes of Wrath monitoring committee living up to expectations and helping to prevent attacks on civilians in view of the rocket attack which was the second on this part of the Galilee in less than a month?

The monitoring group is trying its level best to do whatever it has to do to reduce tension and resolve the various complaints from the parties concerned and create an atmosphere of de-escalation rather than the opposite. Its job is very complex and difficult and sometimes virtually impossible, but it is there and it is doing its part.

Is there any likelihood that Israel might be forced to change the rules of the game in Lebanon in view of the rocket attacks and the marked escalation in hostilities in the security zone in the past few weeks?

In spite of the escalation, I don't see anything that should lead to a dramatic change in our policy. We have, of course, to be more on the alert and more careful in the way we tackle the threats posed by Hizbullah and the other groups that are trying to undermine our presence in the security zone. We have to become more proficient and find new ways of dealing with these threats. This is the ongoing task of the army and it is doing its best. It's too early to say if and when there will be a change in our policy. There's always a possibility (of making changes), but I don't see it happening now.

Is the escalation in fighting, particularly by Hizbullah, connected in any way to Syria's accusations that Israel was behind the bus bombing in Damascus last week?

I don't think the two things are connected. The Syrians know full well that we weren't involved (in the bus bombing). The fact that they are throwing these accusations at our door means that the Syrians are very perturbed about what happens in their own backyard. It's a new phenomenon for them and indicates a degree of weakness, which they don't like. I don't see any correlation, however, between this event and the escalation in fighting in south Lebanon.

Are the Syrians interested in heating up the situation in south Lebanon in an effort to put pressure on the Americans to give more attention to the Israel, Syria and Lebanon track in the peace process?

If there is this intention on the part of the Syrians, I haven't noticed it. Certainly this is not the way to enhance negotiations between us and Syria. It's counterproductive. If anybody, however, believes that by escalating the fighting in south Lebanon they will bring about a change in our deployment there, they are very much mistaken. David Rudge



Gen. John Shalikashvili, chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff (left), meets with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu yesterday in Tel Aviv. (Dana Steinman/Israel Sun)

Shalikashvili assures Mordechai US policy unchanged since Clinton's reelection

GEN. JOHN SHALIKASHVILI, chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, promised yesterday that the US will maintain Israel's qualitative military edge and said the policy would be unaffected by changes in Washington following President Bill Clinton's re-election.

"The USA is committed to the traditional policy of maintaining Israel's qualitative military edge, and the changes in the American administration will not effect this

ARIEH O'SULLIVAN

policy," Shalikashvili told Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai.

The promise is more important now than in the past, since most Arab armies are equipping themselves with Western weapons. Since Israel cannot keep up with the quantitative arms race, it must concentrate on maintaining a qualitative edge, where lack of human and economic resources will be

offset by superiority in ingenuity, technique and sophistication.

Shalikashvili, on a two-day visit to Israel, met with Mordechai yesterday in Tel Aviv. Mordechai told Shalikashvili that Israel was concerned by Iranian and Iraqi efforts to achieve nuclear capability.

According to defense officials, Mordechai and Shalikashvili traded assessments on the situation in the Middle East and on building military and defense cooperation

Yeshiva students move into Christian Quarter site

TEN yeshiva students moved yesterday into a building in Jerusalem's Christian Quarter that a European Jew bought some six months ago from a Christian Arab living abroad.

The yeshiva students are slated to remain in the building until four families move into the 10-room

HERB KEINON

structure in the near future.

Yossi Baumol, executive director of Yeshivat Ateret Cohanim, whose students moved into the structure, said that two security guards moved into the building some two weeks ago, after the

yeshiva discovered that the locks in the building had been tampered with.

Baumol said that tampering with the locks was a sign that the Palestinians had received word of the sale and were trying to disrupt it. (Continued on Page 18)

Yesterday's winning cards and numbers

IN yesterday's daily Chance drawing, the winning cards were the 10 of spades, the queen of hearts, the seven of diamonds and the 8 of clubs.

In last night's weekly Pays Hazak drawing, the holder of ticket number 072583 won NIS 1 million, while ticket 114917 was good for a new car.

Those holding tickets ending in 667250, 740139, 451809, 334322, 035404, 588219, 421478 and 548421 all won NIS 5,000. Tickets ending in 24929, 10402, 74898, 43279, 66118, 80139, 03169, 28042, 42821, 83693, 36145, 93167, 31476, 94663, 96590, 60096, 95984, 43560 and 48399 all were good for NIS 1,000. Those ending in 962, 469, 311 and 628 were good for NIS 100; in 99, 62, 45 or 34, NIS 30; in 63 or 65, NIS 20; and in 0 or 6 NIS 10.

Jordan Valley settlers fume over Labor-Likud position paper

HERB KEINON

JORDAN Valley settlers were furious yesterday at a draft of a Likud-Labor position paper on a final agreement with the Palestinians that does not ensure the Jordan Valley will remain under complete Israeli sovereignty.

The paper, worked on for months by teams headed by Likud's Michael Bitan and Labor's Yossi Beilin, presents two scenarios for the Jordan Valley. Under the first, the region - including the settlements and the military installations - will form a security zone to "defend western Eretz Yisrael from any threat from the east."

Under the second scenario, an IDF presence will be deployed along the Jordan River in an area that will be defined as "a special security zone under Israeli control." (Continued on Page 18)

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Communications said all the callers supported Cherry.



Haredim, who have destroyed bus shelters that carried posters thought to be offensive and modest, are now being portrayed in ads like this one, which is read by a tourist in downtown Jerusalem yesterday. The ad, for Wisotzky tea, emphasizes the traditional nature of the product.

(Orin Hersh)

Court okays 'pornographic' French-Japanese movie

EVELYN GORDON

THE distributors of a movie with portions that are deemed pornographic by the Film Censorship Board do not have to cut the scenes, the High Court of Justice ruled yesterday.

The court ruled on a petition by the distributors of a 1976 French-Japanese production called *L'empire du Sens*. The film, based on historical fact, is about a couple in an obsessive search for better and better sex. After numerous explicit sexual scenes, the woman finally strangles her lover and cuts off his penis.

The Censorship Board decided several times since 1994 to ban the film as pornographic, but each time a minority of its members asked that the discussion be reopened. The minority argued that the film was a quality artistic work, as proven by the numerous awards it won at international film festivals and the rave reviews it received in mainstream newspapers. Finally, a compromise was reached to permit the film to be screened if nine segments, totalling a few minutes in length, were excised. The distributors agreed to cut two sex scenes involving children, but petitioned the court against the order to cut the other seven.

Justices Aharon Barak and Eliyahu Mazza, with Michael Cheshin dissenting, accepted the petition. The relevant test, they said, was whether the work taken as a whole had artistic value, or whether "to the average person, applying contemporary community standards, the dominant theme of the material taken as a whole

appeals to the prurient interest." However, they continued, artistic tastes vary widely. Therefore, if there is a disagreement as to the film's artistic value, the court should err on the side of freedom of expression and permit its screening. In this case, the majority of experts consulted by the board said it was pornographic, but since a substantial minority said it was art, the film must be given the benefit of the doubt and treated as art, they said.

Once the film is deemed art, they continued, sections of it cannot be isolated and treated as pornography. Each section must be considered an integral part of the permitted whole. Therefore, they said, no scenes can be cut except the two involving children, to which the distributors agreed.

Cheshin, in his dissent, noted that the law explicitly gives the board the right to "ban either a whole film or any part thereof." Therefore, he said, there is no basis for the majority's ruling that if the film as a whole is art, the board cannot nix certain sections. The only question that remains is whether those sections are pornographic. And since the board includes representatives of all sectors of the public, he said, it is probably a better judge of "contemporary community standards" than the court. Therefore, its decisions should stand except in extreme cases.

If every scene were really an inalienable part of the work as a whole, he added, there would be no justification for banning the two scenes involving children.

Store owner in Mahane Yehuda crash released from remand

THE Mahane Yehuda store owner whose 15-year-old Arab worker took his car and drove into a storefront, killing one and injuring six, was released from the police lockup yesterday by the Jerusalem Magistrate's Court.

Police said Ephraim Moshe, 35, gave the keys to the car to the youth, who he employs at his vegetable stand, and told him to move his car. This, despite the fact that Moshe knew the minor did not have a driver's license.

Moshe is suspected of manslaughter and of illegally employing a minor.

Police asked the judge to extend Moshe's remand by another week to complete the investigation, noting that he is not cooperating with police. Moshe's lawyer denied the allegations, saying his client did not instruct the youth to drive his car and even called on him to stop heading toward the car a number of times. The lawyer said it was not necessary to hold his client.

The judge refused to grant the police request and released Moshe, though it placed him under certain limitations. Moshe will spend the next week outside Jerusalem and may not contact his friends or acquaintances.

(Him)

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IAF seeks Greek F-4 contract

ARIEH O'SULLIVAN

THE air force is seeking to refurbish 40 Greek F-4 fighter jets in a deal similar to the one signed with Greece's rival Turkey, Israeli officials said yesterday.

The revelation comes as the head of the IAF, Maj.-Gen. Eitan Ben-Eliyahu, is in Athens on a two-day visit to discuss implementation of a military pact signed between Greece and Israel in 1994 that has never been carried out.

The pact, similar to the one signed with Turkey, calls for joint naval exercises and rescue operations, as well as joint air maneuvers. Ben-Eliyahu is being received by his Greek counterpart, Gen. George Antonesis, and is to meet with Defense Minister Kostas Tsoukalas and Secretary of

State for Defense Dimitri Apostolakis.

Ben-Eliyahu is expected to visit the military base at Attica.

Military officials would only confirm that Ben-Eliyahu had left the country, but sources in Greece have said Ben-Eliyahu is there to discuss the military pact.

Greek defense officials said Greece is negotiating with Israel for the refurbishing of the US-built F-4 Phantom jets, Israeli Radio reported. Israeli officials confirmed that discussions with the Greeks on the matter have taken place, but urged that news of the negotiations be kept

under low profile.

One Israeli official said too much exposure for the deal could confound over a decade of effort expended on upgrading Turkish Air Force Phantom jets.

"Now after many, many years of efforts, we expect any week the arrival of the first Turkish F-4s. From a political point of view, a commercial, a business and a marketing point of view, we would not want to jeopardize this deal that has been eleven-and-a-half years in the making," the official said.

Israel is to upgrade 54 F-4 jets for the Turkish Air Force in a deal worth \$630 million for Israel Aircraft Industries.

Police have no clues in S. African's disappearance

RAINE MARCUS

JERUSALEM police are continuing their search for 21-year old Gregory Lewis, who was last seen at the Western Wall in the early evening of December 19.

Lewis was visiting from South Africa, as part of a youth group that stayed at the city's Aish Hatorah yeshiva.

Police have no clue as to his whereabouts. Now his parents, Stanley and Micky Lewis, have left everything behind in Johannesburg to search for their student son, who they described as a "serious boy, who doesn't tell lies and doesn't mix with the wrong types."

"It's as if the ground has swallowed him up. Nobody has seen

him," Micky Lewis told *The Jerusalem Post* yesterday. "I won't leave Israel until I find him."

On December 19, Gregory told his friends that he was going to visit family and friends for the weekend. The next morning he phoned his parents from a public phone box, which was later traced to Tel Aviv's Gordon beach, to find out when his next university exam was scheduled. "I told him I thought it was around January 13, and he was supposed to return home before the rest of the group on around the third," said Micky. "I said I would find out and he

promised to phone on the following Monday. He didn't phone."

He told his parents he was going to spend the weekend with Rabbi Yossi Slutnick of Gush Etzion. He phoned Rabbi Slutnick at around 1:30 p.m. on December 20, saying he was in Haifa and asked what time Shabbat came in. When Slutnick told Gregory that he did not believe he would make it in time, the latter said he would stay at the home of his Haifa relative, Dr. Basil Lewis. But Dr. Basil Lewis was away for the weekend and his phone number is unlisted.

When Gregory failed to turn up

after the weekend at Aish Hatorah in Jerusalem, rabbis there decided to wait until Monday to report his absence to police. Stanley and Micky Lewis were informed two days later and boarded a plane for Israel to look for their son.

"We have put up posters everywhere, in Tel Aviv, Haifa and Jerusalem, but so far no-one has come forward," said Micky. According to Jerusalem police he was last seen at the Western Wall, and was not seen in Tel Aviv nor Haifa. He left Jerusalem with his passport. Gregory Lewis has light brown hair, is around 1.60 meters tall, has brown eyes and speaks English and a little Hebrew.

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A credible, direct channel

OUR attention and the government's efforts are presently focused on the issue of Hebron, and rightly so. But clocks are ticking elsewhere, reminding us, on an almost daily basis, of the explosive potential inherent in Israel's unresolved relationship with Syria.

It is manifested one day in a flurry of violence in south Lebanon; another day in Syrian official accusations that Israel was responsible for the explosion aboard a bus in Damascus last week, followed by thinly-veiled threats of retaliation.

It is important that negotiations with Syria be renewed and a credible direct channel between the two countries be built.

The last direct contact between us took place early last July, when we finalized the agreement for monitoring the cease-fire in Lebanon. It was also an opportunity to arrange a brief meeting between one of Prime Minister Netanyahu's aides and an authorized Syrian representative.

These followed an American effort to define a basis for renewing the Israeli-Syrian negotiations and other efforts by a host of mediators that came to nothing.

As against the new Israeli government's position that the two countries meet "with no prior conditions," Syria has insisted that the negotiations be resumed at the point "at which they were interrupted at Wye Plantation" in the winter of 1996.

The prospect of effecting a Syrian-Israeli breakthrough any time soon is not very bright, given the parties' respective concepts of a solution, or a settlement. But there is more to negotiations and authoritative channels than the expectation of swift agreement.

It would not be wise to seek to isolate Syria or give its leadership the sense that the Israeli government envisages a peace process without Damascus.

And there could be considerable

ITAMAR RABINOVICH

value in reviving the credible Israeli-American-Syrian channel of 1994-96, through which authoritative messages could be exchanged.

The Syrian regime may be groping in the dark for the perpetrators of the most recent bus bombing; it may be genuinely suspicious of Israel, and it could be very important for Hafez Assad to receive a

Why, when and how should the negotiations with Syria be resumed?

reassuring message from the Israeli government.

In less than two weeks the second Clinton administration will be in place and, upon confirmation, Madeleine Albright will become secretary of state.

I genuinely hope that by then the Hebron issue will be behind us, enabling the new secretary to deal with the other important problems that lie ahead in the Arab-Israeli peace process. In that context, she and her team will also have to close the gap between Syrian and Israeli views of the new negotiations' starting point.

THE Netanyahu government has already gone part of the distance. The harsh anti-Syrian rhetoric of the immediate post-election period has been abandoned.

By stating that no senior member of his government was committed to a policy of "not an inch in the Golan," Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai was in fact alluding to a policy of territorial compromise.

Now we know Assad isn't interested in territorial compromise, and that he will insist on "full withdrawal." But he must surely

be aware that for a "pre-negotiation" this statement represents considerable progress.

What about the Syrian demand that the negotiations resume "at the point at which they were interrupted," and the concomitant Syrian (and now Egyptian) claim that Israel agreed (or committed itself) to a full withdrawal from the Golan Heights under the previous government?

I read the recent statements by Presidents Assad and Mubarak very carefully, and my response is that under the previous government there was no agreement, commitment or promise to withdraw from the Golan.

There was one agreement made between us, in 1995, on "the principles underlying the security arrangements" to be negotiated between the two countries.

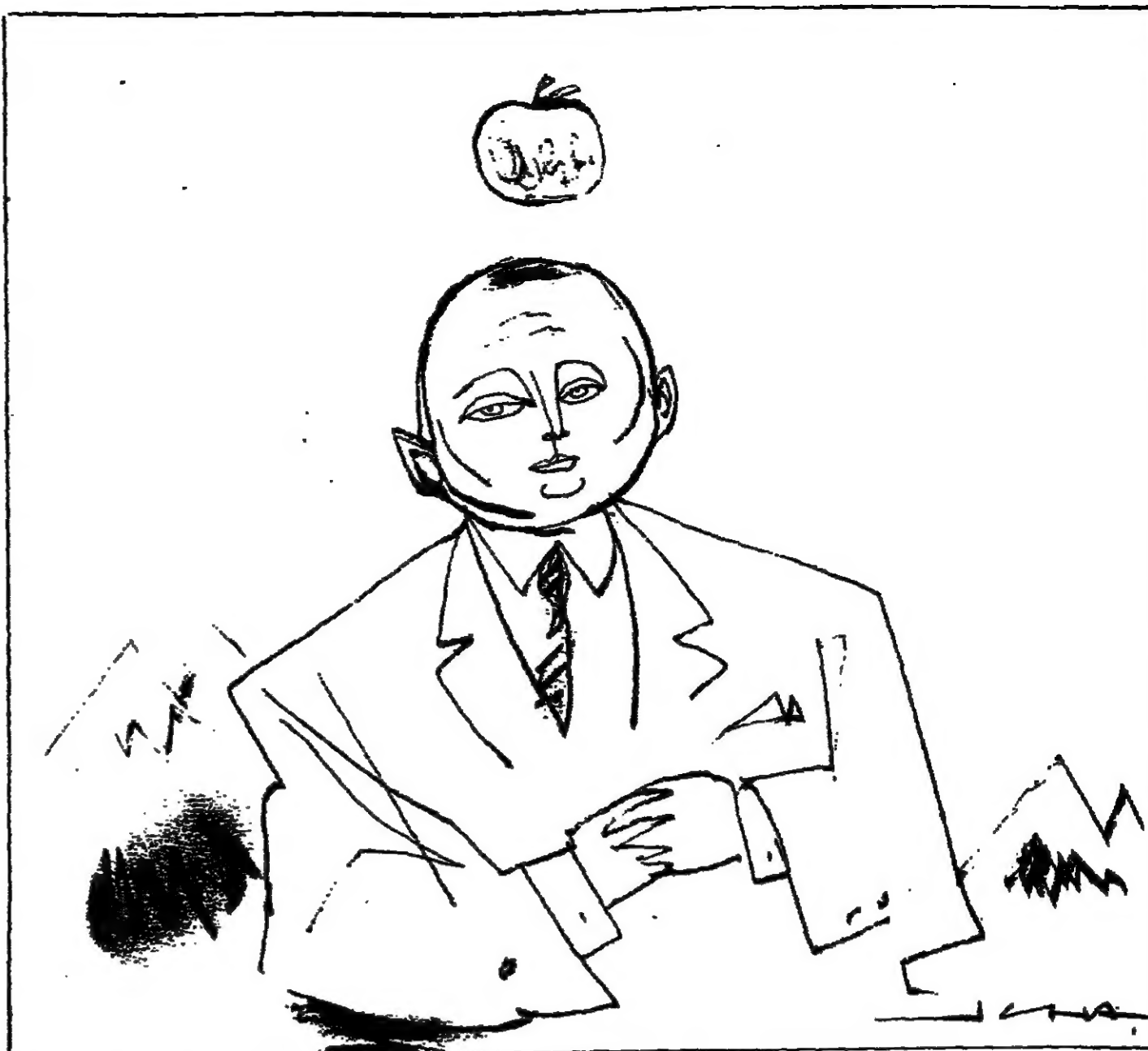
Not everyone in the present government is enamored of that "non-paper," but in my view it is an agreement made by the previous government and inherited by its successors.

To arrive at a mutually acceptable basis for renewing the negotiations Israel will have to adhere to the non-paper, and Syria will have to abandon its demand that the present Israeli government accept not only the commitments but also the policies of its predecessor.

Finding a bridging formula between the two positions is a feasible task.

There is, of course, no sense in meeting for meeting's sake. The real challenge will lie in getting the negotiations off the ground, in keeping them going, and in addressing the real issues of the Israeli-Syrian relationship-cum-conflict.

The writer, Israel's former ambassador to Washington and chief negotiator with Syria, holds the Entinger Chair at Tel Aviv University.



'Switzerland is not afraid of the truth'

THOMAS G. BORER

THE unspeakable horror of the Holocaust touches us all and must never be forgotten.

Thus the survivors of the Holocaust and their families, as well as the Jewish communities worldwide, are entitled to the complete truth on the role of Switzerland as a financial center before, during, and after World War Two.

This desire coincides with the wish of the Swiss people to be informed about the role of Switzerland during the time of the Nazi regime and to assess, in a spirit of fairness and criticism, the history of their country.

Nothing is more important to the people and the Government of Switzerland than establishing the complete truth in this matter as swiftly and humanely as possible.

We are fully committed to shedding full light on our history, and to righting the wrongs that may have been done, guided by the results of this research into history. The investigations in Switzerland are proceeding at a swift pace. Our government and parliament have unanimously passed new legislation of unprecedented nature in less than seven months.

In fact, the law adopted on December 13, 1996 establishes an independent Commission of Experts mandated to conduct a comprehensive investigation into all aspects of Switzerland's role as a financial center during and around the war years, and its relations with Nazi Germany.

In the meantime, the nine members of the ICE, under the chairmanship of Prof. J.-F. Bergier, have already been nominated. They all are outstanding specialists in history, international relations, finance and international law.

All interested circles are represented: Four out of nine members are foreigners; three out of nine are Jewish.

With the assistance of up to 20 field researchers, the ICE will examine the fate of assets of all kinds deposited, invested or acquired by private financial institutions, middlemen and other persons in Switzerland, and connected with victims of Nazi persecution. It will also include assets

originating from members and affiliates of that abhorrent regime. If it is determined that assets that belonged to Holocaust victims are still being held in Switzerland, the Swiss government will make every effort to return them to their rightful owners. If they cannot be traced, we will make the money available to relevant charities.

It is our intention and expectation that we will conclude our investigation as soon as possible. The law lifts the banking and other professional secrecy obligations for a maximum of five years where ever needed for the purpose of this investigation.

The commission is scheduled to begin work within the next few weeks. It will issue intermediate reports periodically. The final report will be fully published once the commission has completed its research.

In the banking sphere, an International Committee of

Eminent Persons was established in May 1996 following a Memorandum of Understanding between the World Jewish Restitution Organization, the World Jewish Congress and the Swiss Bankers Association. Paul Volcker, former chairman of the US Federal Reserve Board, is the president of this committee.

Its mandate is to help oversee the current effort to identify assets of victims of Nazi rule that may

Nothing is more important to its people and government than uncovering the facts about accounts belonging to Holocaust victims

still be held in Swiss banks, and to ensure that any such assets are properly distributed.

It will supervise, with the assistance of three international audit firms, all relevant files in Swiss banking institutions, and examine the methodology of the individual banks. The results of this inquiry are scheduled for publication by mid-1998.

The Swiss Bankers Association has also created an Independent Ombudsman's Contact Office for the search of dormant accounts administered by Swiss banks. Its

services may be requested for inquiries with all banks in Switzerland by anyone who claims to be the heir of a bank customer whose account has been dormant 10 years or more, even without knowing which bank is involved.

LET ME emphasize that the rights of the owners and their legal heirs have never expired under Swiss law, regardless of what measures may or may not have been taken.

The Swiss government is firmly convinced that, with these endeavors and investigations, tools have been crafted that will enable it to review past actions without compromise or complacency.

Switzerland is deeply aware of the pain, mistrust and confusion that surrounds this issue.

Switzerland is not afraid of the truth. In fact, the Swiss government and parliament consider it essential to obtain the truth as quickly as possible.

Yet to do so we must all rise above the speculations, hasty conclusions and unsubstantiated claims that further rob the process of the compassion, tact and understanding it so rightly deserves.

The writer is head of the Task Force on heirless assets of victims of Nazism at the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, Bern, Switzerland.

Room to negotiate creatively

MARK A. HELLER

MANY of the analysts who have given up predicting when a Hebron agreement will be signed are now trying to explain why it doesn't happen. This task is almost as daunting as the first.

Having disposed of "hot pursuit" weapons for the Palestinian police, Shuhada Street (what Sabab Erekat calls "the Champs Elysees" of Hebron), and all the other Hebron issues except for the Tomb of the Patriarchs, Israeli and Palestinian negotiators are now hung up on the non-Hebron issues of Oslo 2 that remain to be implemented.

The most prominent of these at the present stage is further redeployment (FRD).

According to published reports, Arafat is demanding that Israel recommit itself to complete all three of the FRDs called for in the interim agreement by the original deadline of September 1997.

Binyamin Netanyahu, after initially resisting any commitment and then agreeing to commit himself only to the first FRD, has now indicated a willingness to carry them out by May 1999, the date by which the permanent-status negotiations are supposed to be wrapped up.

This accords with the premier's known preference for postponing implementation of the FRDs, especially the third, until after a permanent status agreement, lest most of Israel's bargaining cards be lost before the immensely difficult negotiations on Jerusalem, settlements, refugees, borders, and the political status of the Palestinian entity even begin.

More recently, Ehud Barak joined the fray by proposing that the FRDs be delayed - bringing down the wrath of his Labor colleagues for allegedly advocating a retreat from the agreement signed by a government of which he himself was foreign minister.

Amid the uproar a basic question gets ignored: Why is it so important to know "when," if nobody has any idea of "what?" The prevailing assumption is that the first two FRDs will be very modest affairs, but that the third one will involve a wholesale withdrawal leaving the Palestinians in control of 85-90 percent of the territory.

That, in any event, is the Palestinian interpretation; and though it is supported nowhere in the text of the agreement, it seems to have been implicitly accepted by everyone else - the international media, Netanyahu and his critics inside the cabinet, and the rest of the Israeli political class.

IN FACT, the only ones who don't pronounce on this subject are Shimon Peres, Uri Savir and Yoel Singer - for good reason.

The interim agreement says absolutely nothing (unless there are secret understandings) about the extent of the FRDs, except that Israeli military forces will redeploy to "specified military locations."

What are these locations? The agreement does not say. How are they to be determined? On this

point it is more forthcoming, if not necessarily more instructive.

According to Article XI, paragraph 2.f, "The specified military locations referred to in Article X, paragraph 2, above, will be determined in the further redeployment phases within the specified time-frame ending not later than 18 months from the date of the inauguration of the Council and will be negotiated in the permanent-status negotiations."

What this appears to mean is

Netanyahu should stop complaining and acknowledge that Rabin and Peres weren't fools

that permanent-status negotiations are necessary in order to implement the further redeployment provisions of the interim agreement. Since I am not a lawyer, this strikes me as slightly bizarre, but it is definitely not a misprint.

In Annex I, the Protocol Concerning Redeployment and Security Arrangements, Article 1, paragraph 10, uses almost precisely the same language: "The specified military locations referred to in Article X, paragraph 2 of this Agreement will be determined in the further redeployment phases... and will be negotiated in the permanent-status negotiations."

There are two major implications of this procedure. The first is that further redeployment cannot take place until the military locations are specified; and these cannot be specified until Israeli and Palestinian, in permanent-status negotiations, agree on the specifications.

The current Palestinian interpre-

tation, which seems to equate military "locations" only with settlements and army bases while ignoring defensive alignments in the Jordan Valley and training areas and ranges in the Judean Desert, suggests that this will not be an easy negotiation.

In any case, the idea that a prior commitment to conclude negotiations by any given date can be meaningful contradicts both common sense and the accumulated experience of the Oslo process.

In the absence of agreed definitions of "specified military locations," it is a mystery what Arafat and the Palestinians believe they will gain, and what Netanyahu and his critics believe Israel will lose, by committing to any date at all.

The second implication is that because of what critics of the legal profession would describe as "a loophole big enough to drive a truck through," the agreement is fully consistent with Netanyahu's expressed preference to discuss permanent status now, before the further redeployments have been carried out.

Indeed, it literally requires permanent-status negotiations as the next step, unless the Palestinians are prepared to accept unilateral Israeli interpretations.

Thus while he complains ceaselessly about the terrible burden of Oslo bequeathed to him by Rabin and Peres, the prime minister might do better to acknowledge that they weren't complete fools and recognize that they left him more than enough room to negotiate creatively and constructively - if that is what he really wants to do.

The writer is senior research associate at the Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies at Tel Aviv University.

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- 11:30-13:00 - "The Slow Learner"
Mrs. Chaya Weinberg
- 13:00-14:30 - "Selected Short Fiction"
Mrs. Elisheva Gordon
- 13:30-17:30 - "Teaching the Dyslexic Pupil"
Mrs. Susie Secemski
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Tamil rebels attack military bases

TAMIL separatist rebels bombed two military camps yesterday with artillery and mortars, in a battle that left 60 soldiers dead and 232 wounded, the military said.

The casualties occurred when troops "successfully repulsed the attacks," a military statement said. The casualties may rise as troops continue to search for some missing soldiers.

Military intercepts of rebel radio transmission indicated 500 guerrillas were killed or wounded in the fighting, the ministry claimed.

A rebel spokesman in London, Anton Raj, dismissed the government claim as false. "The Sri Lankan government routinely exaggerates LTTE (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam) deaths and conceals its own deaths to maintain the sagging morale of its troops," Raj said in a telephone interview.

The rebel spokesman said details of the attack were not immediately available, but he claimed the troops "appeared to be facing severe defeat."

"Terrorists in large numbers tried to infiltrate the military camps at Elephant Pass and

DEXTER CRUEZ
COLOMBO

Paranthan," deputy Defense Minister Anuruddha Ratwatte told Parliament. "This type of attacks are unavoidable."

Military officials speaking on condition of anonymity, said the rebels had managed to sever the link that troops from Elephant Pass have with Paranthan in the south. But reinforcements, supported by warplanes and helicopter gunships, launched a counter attack and regained the link nearly 11 hours later.

Elephant Pass camp is strategically located, linking the mainland with the northern Jaffna peninsula that government troops captured earlier last year.

Paranthan, 280 kilometers north of the capital, Colombo, is a nearby town that is the only link for the military in the north to reach the Kilinochchi area, recently captured by troops.

The attack appeared to be aimed at isolating troops in Kilinochchi town, from those being massed at

Paranthan for a new offensive further south from there, the officials said.

The rebels had managed to destroy several long-range artillery guns and armored cars during the attacks, before withdrawing by boat and by land toward the east, officials said.

In July 1991, 600 rebels and 200 soldiers were killed when the military thwarted a guerrilla siege of Elephant Pass army base.

On July 26, troops launched an offensive southward from Elephant Pass base, and captured Paranthan.

Two months later, troops launched another offensive from Paranthan and captured Kilinochchi town after an eight-day battle in which 253 soldiers and 690 rebels were killed.

The rebels are fighting for a homeland in the north and east of the Indian Ocean island nation, claiming that Tamils are discriminated against by the majority Sinhalese, who control the government and military. More than 46,000 people have been killed in Sri Lanka's civil war. (AP)



British Prime Minister John Major shakes hands with industrial workers during a visit to a factory in Calcutta yesterday. Major is in India on a two-day visit with a delegation of business and industry leaders, to coincide with India's 50th anniversary of independence from Britain. (Reuters)

Yeltsin suffers new setback in struggle for health

MOSCOW (Reuters) - President Boris Yeltsin, forced back into hospital by pneumonia just two months after major heart surgery, found himself fighting a new battle yesterday to prove he can rule Russia.

The Kremlin, keen to quash alarm over this latest setback, said the 65-year-old president, who was admitted to a Moscow hospital on Wednesday, had a normal temperature and was being treated with antibiotics.

It said Yeltsin had discussed affairs of state by telephone with Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin and NTV television said arrangements had been made for the Kremlin leader to retain control over Russia's nuclear arsenal from hospital.

Chernomyrdin left Moscow yesterday for a scheduled break near the capital but was keeping a close eye on developments.

"Treatment of the pneumonia is being carried out with modern antibiotics and with general therapy," a Kremlin statement said.

Heart surgeon Renat Akchurin,

who led the quintuple bypass operation on Yeltsin on November 5, said the president's doctors had told him he was in "a quite satisfactory" condition. Akchurin told reporters the pneumonia was not related to the operation and that the president's overall health allowed him to perform his duties.

"The post-operative period finished a month ago, so it seems to me that it makes no sense to now connect something with the operation," he told reporters.

Yeltsin, who has vast powers under Russia's post-communist constitution, only returned to work on December 23 after almost six months out of the Kremlin with heart problems.

When he met German Chancellor Helmut Kohl on Saturday, Yeltsin looked pale and tired, and the Kremlin had built an ambitious schedule of meetings to show he was back in control.

A parliamentary official said yesterday the first of those meetings, a January 17 summit of the

former Soviet states making up the Commonwealth of Independent States might be delayed. It had already been put off from December due to Yeltsin's health.

Alexander Shokhin, a pro-government deputy parliamentary speaker, told RIA news agency Yeltsin had returned to work alarmingly quickly. "There should be no haste here," he said.

Yeltsin's opponents were quick to seize on the illness as a sign he was unable to rule Russia's 150 million people.

"Wherever the president may be...he is not able to take the right decisions," liberal leader Grigory Yavlinsky told Reuters.

General Alexander Lebed, sacked by Yeltsin in October for overt presidential ambitions, went further, telling reporters "there was not much hope" and that Yeltsin should resign.

Russia's fledgling financial markets took the news in their stride. Share prices slid off recent highs but then recovered, and other markets firmed as dealers awaited developments.

But some Russians were skeptical. "First they said he had the flu, now they say it's the first signs of pneumonia. God only knows what he really has," said Alexander Maksutov, 63, a postal worker, interviewed on a snowy central Moscow street.

Russian FM: Chechnya may soon break away

MOSCOW (Reuters) - Chechnya could soon break away from Russia unless the government moves quickly to block the process, Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov said yesterday.

"There is a real threat that Chechnya could split from Russia," Russian news agencies quoted Primakov as telling a cabinet meeting. The major task for the Russian government and other bodies is "to think about it now and not let this happen," RIA news agency quoted him as saying.

The rebel mainly-Muslim region is due to hold presidential elections on January 27 following a 21-month conflict between Russia and Chechen separatist fighters which ended in August. Russian officials have supported the elections even though the main candidates, most of whom headed the armed resistance in the bloody conflict, insist on Chechnya's independence.

Interfax quoted Primakov as saying the government could help prevent a split by streamlining relations with the states of the Islamic Conference organization and the Chechen diaspora in various regions of Russia and overseas.

Moscow said on Sunday it had withdrawn all the troops it sent to Chechnya two years ago to stop it splitting from Russia.

Saddam offers Ramadan amnesty for spies

BAGHDAD (Reuters) - Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein will pardon spies giving themselves up during the Muslim fasting month of Ramadan, Iraqi newspapers reported yesterday.

They said Saddam also instructed that all who confessed would be allowed to keep the money they had made from their spying activities.

The newspapers reported that Saddam had been prompted to offer the amnesty after watching on Iraqi television members of two espionage rings confess to spying for the CIA and Mossad.

Iraqi television on Wednesday showed three Iraqis who confessed to spying for the Mossad.

Last month the television also showed four others who admitted to working for the US Central Intelligence Agency. The United States and Israel dismissed Iraqi claims to have smashed CIA or Mossad spy rings.

The newspapers said the pardon would go into effect yesterday. It was not clear whether the amnesty would cover members of the two spy networks.

Spies are rarely pardoned in Iraq and they usually receive harsh punishment. Saddam admitted that his amnesty fell "outside the norms which the revolution has been practicing."

"President Saddam Hussein, while taking this decision, apologizes to noble Iraqi men and women who preserved the covenant and kisses their heads and hopes they understand the motives behind this decision," the papers said quoting a presidential statement issued late on Wednesday.

The statement said that Saddam took the decision "to provide an opportunity, even to the worst people, to abandon the path of wrongdoing and falsehood," the Iraqi news agency INA reported.

US stars tell Kohl: Discrimination against Scientology is reminiscent of Nazism

FRANKFURT (AP) - Dustin Hoffman, Oliver Stone, and Goldie Hawn are 34 names of US celebrities listed as signers of an international newspaper advertisement yesterday comparing Germany's treatment of Scientologists with Hitler's treatment of Jews.

"The people who signed this know nothing about Germany and don't want to know," Chancellor Helmut Kohl told a news conference in Bonn. "Otherwise they wouldn't be peddling such a thing."

The full-page ad in the widely read *International Herald Tribune* is in the form of a letter to Kohl,

expressing "concern at the invidious discrimination against Scientologists practiced in your country and by your own party."

The letter said, "This organized oppression is beginning to sound familiar... like the Germany of 1936 rather than 1996... Extremists of your party should not be permitted to believe that the rest of the world will look the other way. Not this time."

"We are not Scientologists, but we cannot just look the other way while this appalling situation continues and grows," said the ad, which also carried the names of producer Aaron Spelling, Cable Network News (CNN) interviewer

Larry King and novelist Mario Puzo.

The ad also mentions that Scientologists are banned from political parties because of their beliefs, and refers to Labor Minister Norbert Blum's proposal to ban Scientologists from all positions of public service.

"In the 1930s it was the Jews. Today it is the Scientologists," said the letter. "The issue is not whether one approves or disapproves of the teachings of Scientology. Organized government discrimination against any group on the basis of its beliefs is abhorrent even where the majority disagrees with those beliefs."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Death-cheating Brazilian turns up at own funeral
BRASILIA (Reuters) - A Brazilian handyman who has cheated death twice in the past returned home this week to find he had missed his own funeral by two hours.

Lourival Souza de Santos, 33, who has previously survived a smashed skull and multiple bullet wounds, was declared dead on Tuesday.

A police spokesman in the Itapua suburb of the northeastern city of Salvador said Santos' brother mistakenly identified him as a murder victim, whose face had been mutilated by gunshots.

"The irony is that Lourival has survived a crushed skull in a fight and eight bullet wounds from a murder attempt," he told Reuters by telephone. "It's only when nothing at all had happened to him that he was finally declared dead."

"It's like I have three lives, at least," Santos told national Globo television.

News agency Agencia Estado quoted Santos' mother as saying she thought the corpse the family buried on Tuesday was "slightly large."

Here's licking at you, kid - the Bogart stamp
WASHINGTON (Reuters) - The United States Postal Service said yesterday it would star movie tough guy Humphrey Bogart in a 32-cent stamp due out in June.

"Here's licking at you, kid," the service in a statement announcing the Bogart stamp, a play on his famous line "Here's looking at you, kid" from the classic film *Casablanca*.

"Bogey" joins Marilyn Monroe and James Dean as the third in the "Legends of Hollywood" stamp series. Postmaster General Marvin Runyon said Bogart's contribution to the "golden age of film" made him a fitting choice.

"We hope that Bogey will 'play it again' in stamp collections this year," added Barry Ziehl, a Postal Service spokesman, another take-off on a noted saying by Bogart.

The stamp will be based on a publicity shot for the 1946 movie *The Big Sleep* in which he starred with Lauren Bacall, his fourth wife.

Sinatra hospitalized after apparent heart attack

LOS ANGELES (AP) - Frank Sinatra was hospitalized yesterday after an apparent heart attack, his doctor said.

"He appears to have had an uncomplicated heart attack and is undergoing tests, observation and treatment and the prognosis is good," Dr. Rex Kennamer said in a statement released by Sinatra spokeswoman Susan Reynolds.

Sinatra, 81, was taken to Cedars-Sinai Medical Center by paramedics, Reynolds said.

She said Sinatra's wife, Barbara, was with the entertainer.

Reynolds didn't know if Sinatra was in the intensive care unit.

Sinatra returned to his Beverly Hills home Tuesday after a 24-hour stay at Cedars-Sinai. A source speaking on condition of anonymity told The Associated Press that that hospitalization was for a prearranged procedure and wasn't a life-threatening illness.

Two months ago, Sinatra was at Cedars-Sinai for eight days for treatment of what was described as a pinched nerve and mild pneumonia.

An uncomplicated heart attack usually means a patient doesn't need intensive care, said hospital spokesman Ron Wise, adding that all information about Sinatra would be released by Reynolds.

No further information was released by the doctor or Reynolds.

"This is different than what's been going on in the past," said a hospital source, referring to the two recent hospital stays, which the source said had nothing to do with the heart. "It's very different this time."

Sinatra turned 81 on Dec. 12 and celebrated privately at home with his family amid reports that his health was deteriorating.

The management and staff of Keren Yaldenu Tikvatuenu Center extend heartfelt condolences to Jack Sklan and family on the passing of his dear brother **LESLIE SKLAN**

Keren Clore mourns the passing of **MORDECHAI MAYER** and extends heartfelt condolences to the family
Vivien Clore Duffield, Chairman
The Trustees and the Executive Director

The shloshim of my beloved husband **BENJAMIN SKLAR**
will be observed on Wednesday, January 15, 1997 at 3 p.m., at the Shikun Vatikim cemetery, Netanya.
A bus will leave Rehov Nitza at 2:30 p.m.
We will meet at the main gate.

With great sorrow we announce the passing of **CLARA (Lala) DIESTEL**
in Hong Kong on December 31, 1996.
Henrietta Diestel Andrea and Daniel Weiss
Frances Dergel Gustav and Judith Diestel
For further details, please call 02-651-8023.

New York Mizrahi-Bnei Akiva-Religious Zionist Youth in recognition of the lifelong devotion of **SOL BRAFMAN** and his entire family to Religious Zionism - Bnei Akiva proudly announce the establishment of the **JERUSALEM MIDRESHET HAROVA Bnei Akiva Scholarship Program** in loving memory of their beloved wife, mother and grandmother **ROSE BRAFMAN**
DEDICATION AND RECEPTION
Tuesday, January 14, 1997 (6 Shvat 5757) at 1:30 p.m.
Midreshet Harova, 50 Rehov Chabad, Jewish Quarter, Jerusalem
Information: Daniel Ehrlich 02-566-5819 Midreshet 02-628-7239

The memorial stone in loving memory of **YISRAEL (Yissy) RAPSTOFF** will be consecrated on Friday, January 17, at 10:00 a.m. at Har Hamenuhot, Jerusalem.
We will meet at the entrance at 9:45 a.m.
The family

Rivka and Aharon Eden we share in your grief on the passing of your **BROTHER**
Su-Keet Ltd.
ZAG Ltd

Two years have passed since our dear and beloved **MINKA (Miriam) POLLAK** has departed from us.
Her memory will be with us forever.
Azriel
Nili, Rita
and grandchildren
Netanya, January 11, 1997

The unveiling of the tombstone of our dear mother, grandmother and sister **MENA RABINOWITZ** will take place on Sunday, January 12, 1997 at 3 p.m., at Har Hamenuhot cemetery, Har Tamir section, block Lamed Alef
Daughters: Rivka and Gershon Fraenkel
Michelle and Lenny Friedman
Judy Rabinowitz
Elissa and Julian Weiss
and families
Sisters: Bella Bender and Pauline Cramer
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Who bombed Damascus?

There is no shortage of suspects as Syria reels from an increasing spiral of terror.
Steve Rodan and Jacob Dallal report

THE first attack reported was on December 18, when a grenade was thrown at a Syrian army bus north of Beirut, in which one person was killed. The usual suspects — scores of Lebanese Christian nationalists — were rounded up and the case was shelved.

Then the strikes turned more lethal. A bomb exploded near Syrian military intelligence in Lebanon's Bekaa Valley and killed two soldiers. And then, the explosions moved to Syria itself. The most deadly was the bombing of a bus on December 31, which killed at least 13 passengers and wounded 44. Another bomb was said to have exploded along the main road between Banias and Tartus, but it did not cause any injuries or damage.

For supporters of the Syrian regime, the most worrying aspect was the silence of President Hafez Assad. He was preparing for an operation on his prostate. His son Bashar was not heard from either.

After more than a quarter of a century in power, the question is who wants to harm Assad and why does he think this is only the beginning? The suspects, as well as the reasons, are numerous.

"His government is brittle," says Daniel Pipes, a leading Syrian expert and head of the US-based Middle East Forum. "It controls everything, but it could disappear in a moment."

Assad, however, is not suffering alone. Over the last month, several Arab leaders have been reeling from attempted coups or assassination attempts. Egyptian security sources say President Hosni Mubarak was the target of a plot by Islamic fundamentalists to storm his palace in Alexandria on November 29 and kill him. At the same time, the son of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, Uday, was seriously injured in an assassination attempt. Six senior Libyan officers were said this week to have been sentenced to death, convicted of trying to overthrow Colonel Muammar Gaddafi.

Little wonder then, that in Tunis, Arab interior ministers held their most intensive talks to date on the threats to their regimes, with such radical regimes as Syria and Libya seeking regional cooperation to fight terrorism. "The Arab nation today is exposed to the threat from within, from terrorist elements that have sold their souls to the devil," Syrian Interior Minister Mohammed Hirsh told the conference, which closed on Monday.

AND NOT surprisingly, Syria is blaming its troubles on Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. "In order to close entirely the door to the peace process, the Netanyahu government is resorting to criminal acts against Syrian buses in Lebanon and Syria," writes Mohammed Alwadi, edi-



tor-in-chief of the Syrian government daily *Tishreen*. "It is clear that Israel is responsible for these attacks and that it intends to carry out more terrorist attacks."

Syrian government sources say they have proof. They point to a remark by the Israeli government coordinator in Lebanon, Uri Lubrani, who told ITN Channel 1 on Monday that he supports striking at Syrian interests in Lebanon.

The sources say the recent bombing campaign was launched after Syrian authorities in November captured an Israeli spy ring suspected of operating in Syria and Lebanon. The sources, quoted by the London-based Arabic daily *Al Sharq al-Awsat*, add that several of those arrested were aligned with the now-defunct Lebanese Forces militia, which helped Israel during the 1982 war in Lebanon.

"The nationality of those who carried out the operation is not important," a senior Syrian source said, "but there is sufficient evidence that the Israeli apparatus is behind this activity."

A VETERAN Middle East diplomat who has served many years in Syria says he does not believe Israel carried out the bombings. Still, he agrees with some of the Syrian assertions. "The least improbable of all the possibilities is that this is the work of Lebanese Christians," the diplomat, who did not want to be identified, says.

Arab diplomats say Syrian

authorities might have run into difficulties in their investigation. The scores of Lebanese Christians arrested after the attack north of Beirut last month have all been released. The last was Pierre Atallah, a journalist for the daily *Al Nahar*, who was suspected of what a Lebanese military court termed "maintaining relations with pro-Israeli agents."

Lebanese Christian nationalists expressed relief and refused to discuss the attacks. "I don't want to comment because it is a very sensitive moment and a very sensitive situation," Michel Aoun, the ousted Lebanese military chief of staff and president, said

he said. "I prefer to wait and see what happens."

Another suspect in the bombings is Turkey, angry at the Syrian support of the PKK Kurdish underground, based in Lebanon's Bekaa Valley, which is said to have been responsible for the deaths of hundreds of Turkish police officers and civilians in southeastern Turkey over the past few years.

In May, Turkey was blamed for a spate of small-scale bombings around Damascus, one of which was said to have been aimed at Assad. More than 600 ethnic Turks living in Syria were arrested.

"It could be that the latest

Firro, an expert on Syria and Lebanon, says that the bus bombed on December 31 was headed toward Homs, a popular tourist site frequented by Christian revelers. Firro imagines that many on the bus were carrying liquor, anathema to the fundamentalists.

Arab diplomatic sources based in Damascus say that after more than a decade in hiding, underground Islamic fundamentalists in Syria might feel the time has come to renew the attacks against the Assad regime. They say the fundamentalists have been receiving quiet encouragement from such disparate elements as Iraq, Iran's Revolutionary Guard, and

plate force.

But Seale, in a recorded address to a recent conference at Haifa University, says Assad has few options. The Syrian ruler's long-held doctrine was containment of Israel, preventing it from making inroads with the Palestinians or Jordanians, creating a balance of deterrence with Israel, and seeking comprehensive peace guaranteed by a balance of power. "Not much has remained of that doctrine," Seale says.

Syrian ambitions for strategic parity with Israel have been abandoned, Seale says. Assad failed to prevent Israeli agreements with the Palestinians and Jordan. Syria regards Israel as stronger than ever. The only thing left is Lebanon, Assad, Seale says, managed to snatch that country away from Israel in the wake of the 1982 war. He calls this Assad's greatest achievement.

But the recent attacks in Syria place that achievement in jeopardy. Renewed tension in Lebanon would destroy the fragile stability on which Beirut's growing economy is based. For Assad, Lebanon's well-being is a vital interest. Close to one million Syrians make their living from Lebanon, either as laborers, or drug dealers, or Syrian officers skimming off Lebanese imports.

Seale lists Assad's strategy today. Top on the list is to mobilize Western diplomacy to stop what the president is warning is an Israeli attack; second is to enhance the strategic partnership with Iran.

A third is to revive a two-front strategy against Israel, with Egyptian troops at least crossing into Sinai in any future Arab war. The remaining two are strength-

ening the Syrian presence in Lebanon and supporting Hamas, Hizbullah, and other pro-Syrian militants.

ANOTHER SUSPECT in the bombings is Iran, Syria's strategic ally. Middle East diplomats and analysts agree that tensions between Damascus and Teheran have risen over the last two months. Indeed, *Al Sharq al-Awsat* reported on January 2 that Iran was thought to have been responsible for the bombings.

The reason for the tension between the two countries is Syria's failure to juggle its loyalty to both Iran and its Arab rivals. The most recent example was a parley in Cairo of the so-called "six-plus-two," comprised of the six members of the Gulf Cooperation Council as well as Egypt and Syria. At the conference, the Arabs called on Iran to withdraw from several disputed islands in the Gulf, including Abu Mussa. The forum also expressed opposition to Iranian deployment of surface-to-surface missiles on the islands.

Syria supported both resolutions. As the *Iran News* put it: "This was a knife in the back of Iran. Iran has always come to the defense of Syrian rights in every international forum possible and never did we imagine that she would sell her friendly relations with Iran to these miserable oil principalities."

Israeli analysts point to other sources of tension. One is south Lebanon. Iran has been trying to increase military support of Hizbullah and has ordered it to step up attacks in the security zone. But the Syrians have been trying to decrease tensions and ensure that Hizbullah observe the basic tenets of the understandings attained in the wake of last April's Operation Grapes of Wrath.

Intelligence sources say the Iranians have complained that the Syrians have held up arms shipments to Hizbullah in Damascus.

"Since April, both Hizbullah and Syria have tried to stop karayushas and not to violate the understandings of Grapes of Wrath," one source says.

Still, few analysts believe that either Iraq or Iran is involved in the bombings. They point out that the *Iran News* report of December 31 was renounced as not expressing an official position. Iraqi involvement appears unlikely, they say, because, despite Saddam Hussein's criticism of the Syrian occupation of Lebanon, Baghdad seeks a rapprochement with Damascus. "Iranian involvement doesn't make sense," says Zisser. "And Iraq is trying to return to the Arab world and not to make new enemies."

THE FINAL possibility is that the bombings are the result of feuding among Assad's Alawite associates. Arab sources assert that Assad's brother Rifaat, exiled for his attempt to stage a coup against Assad in 1983, was placed under house arrest early last month.

Another of Assad's brothers, Jamil, was reported to have been sent into exile on December 22, accused of corruption. Eight days later, a French Foreign Ministry spokesman confirmed that Jamil had been given a three-month visa.

Moreover, Assad was also reported to have dismissed Jamil's son-in-law, Kusi Aslan, one of the heads of Syria's largest contracting company. The reason for the dismissal was not disclosed but it is believed connected to the power struggle within the family.

The struggle is over inheriting the regime. Assad's oldest son, Basil, was killed in what was reported as a traffic accident in 1994. Since then, the ailing president has been grooming Bashar, an ophthalmologist by training. Lately, diplomats in Damascus report that they have heard rumors resurface that Basil's death was ordered by his two uncles, Rifaat and Jamil.

Can Assad stop the terrorist bombings quickly? Most analysts and diplomats agree that despite his operation he remains in full control.

But Firro is skeptical. "These bombings constitute a trend," he says. "If someone is interested, they could continue."

The Arab nation today is exposed to the threat from within, from terrorist elements that have sold their souls to the devil

in an interview with *The Jerusalem Post* from his home in Paris. "I am following events from far away. I don't know exactly what is happening there," Aoun said that until this week, many Lebanese had been detained in the wake of the attacks. "During the last week, the number of arrests has eased off," he said.

The Lebanese general also refused to discuss the attacks in Syria. "I don't want to speak about such an important issue,"

bombings are the continuation of those in May," says Eyal Zisser, a researcher at Tel Aviv University's Dayan Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies.

This possibility, however, is not widely held. "When I first heard of the bombings, I thought it was either Israel or Turkey," a Middle East diplomat says. "But when I examined the reports I thought differently. The reason was that the bombings weren't on a scale that would cause harm to the Syrian regime."

DIPLOMATS AND analysts also suspect Islamic fundamentalist opponents of the Assad regime. Haifa University professor Kais

the Moslem Brotherhood in Jordan.

The sources say the fundamentalists might have decided to take advantage of what they describe as the sense of vulnerability in the Assad regime since the election of Netanyahu. Patrick Seale, the Western journalist closest to Assad and author of his biography, recently returned from Syria. His description of the Assad regime is that it is filled by a "sense of shock and disquiet" over the new Israeli government. As Seale sees it, Assad thought he was close to some agreement with Israel only to see the Israeli elections snatch the opportunity away. Now, without the Golan Heights, Assad can only contem-

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This lesson was brought to you by ...

The Education Ministry has revealed a controversial proposal to increase its budget by allowing advertising in schools. Ruth Mason reports

COCA-COLA, McDonald's, MTV, shopping malls - the list of American success stories that Israel has enthusiastically adopted is long and well-known. But now the government is suggesting copying an American failure - commercial advertising in the public schools.

Several years ago, American publishing magnate Chris Whittle developed Channel One, a television station that was to air educational programs as well as commercials in the public schools. The plan was killed in its infancy by strong parental objections.

The idea of funneling funds into our ailing school system from commercial advertising is not new in Israel, but previous attempts were scuttled by outraged parents and teachers.

Now, the new director-general of the Education Ministry, Ben-Zion Del, wants to try again. He has appointed a special committee, headed by Yitzhak Cohen, deputy director-general of the ministry, to look into the matter and establish guidelines.

Advertising revenue will significantly decrease the heavy financial burden parents now assume for what is supposed to be free public education, ministry officials said. Businesses would be allowed to advertise in textbooks, computer programs, school hallways and during assemblies.

"We're not talking about a Bible lesson brought to you by Coca-Cola," said Yael Farber, an Education Ministry official who sits on the committee. "It will be done with a lot of controls."

Just what will be allowed is as yet unclear, but Israeli businesses are welcoming this new openness on the part of the education authorities. "Many educational institutions which today are suffering from lack of funds, will be able to get revenues from advertising for programs which will benefit pupils," said Yair Feldmann, general manager of the Advertisers' Association of Israel. "Of course, it will have to be done in good taste and with limits. We won't want to write 'Drink Pepsi' on every child's desk."

Despite talk about limits, supervision and good taste, parents, teachers and even children are opposed to the idea. "Schools should be free of commercial pressures," said Shai Lachman, chairman of the National Parents Association. "Advertising is simply not educational. We should not take advantage of impressionable children in order to benefit advertisers." His deputy, Haniya Sulami, of the poor Haniya neighborhood in Tel Aviv, echoes the worries of many critics that the allowing advertising in the schools will only increase the already large socio-economic gap between schools in richer and poorer neighborhoods. "Who will

advertise in a school in the Haniya neighborhood, where parents don't even have the money to send their children to school with sandwiches?" he asked. "This idea is a disaster. Only the strong schools will benefit."

Education Ministry officials say they have solved this problem. Rather than allowing individual schools to benefit directly from advertising, all revenues will be pooled into one national fund that will then be equally distributed among all schools. "In this way, schools in which advertisers are not interested will also benefit from the money," Del said in a prepared statement.

SOME CRITICS see this move as a signal that the government is giving up on the schools. "We see in this an attempt on the part of the government to shirk its responsibility to finance compulsory public education," said Abraham Ben-Shabat, general secretary of the Israel Teachers' Union. "School walls should be covered with instructional materials, not with ads selling soft drinks. This is not in keeping with a school's role. There is also the danger that a school will become dependent on its sponsor to the detriment of its professional independence. We want the schools to be free from outside pressures and influences."

In answer to the government's claim that it doesn't have enough money to properly fund the schools, Lachman said: "There is no such thing as 'no money.' It's all a question of priorities. Education must stand alongside security in importance. Israel has few national resources, but we do have a human treasure, and we must invest in it."

Experts in child development and advocates for children also voice concerns about the new plan. Dr. Philip Veerman, director of the Israel branch of Defense for Children International, said advertising in the schools may well infringe on the rights of children. "The United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child, which Israel ratified in 1991, encourages signatory nations to develop guidelines to protect the child from information and material injurious to his or her well-being," he said.

"And advertising could be injurious. It is a form of indoctrination. The younger the child, the more dangerous it becomes. Young children don't have the capacity to reflect, to choose, to know what's good for them and what is not. They will be easily influenced by what advertisers cook up for them. They are no match for the marketing people whose job it is to aim their products at this age group."

Sylvia Zilberman, a senior educational psychologist in

Jerusalem, agrees. "Younger children are much more vulnerable to the gimmicks of advertising than older ones," she said. "It is difficult to explain to a young child that what is written is not necessarily true or can be misleading. Advertising in the schools will expose children more than is necessary to the false idea that you need a certain product in order to be better, complete, happy. It will also increase social pressure and will put extreme pressure on parents. Children will come home even more than they already do with the idea that if others have it, I need it too."

Both Zilberman and Veerman said that they would have fewer objections if the products advertised were educational, such as books and computer programs, and were aimed at older children.

EDUCATION Ministry officials as well as business representatives said critics of the plan are naive. "With the advent of commercial television, children are already exposed to so much advertising," said the ministry's Yael Farber. "We can't bury our heads in the sand. At least here, we'll have control over what they

are exposed to. And the children will learn something about critical viewing."

"It's true that when children buy a kids' newspaper with advertising, they do so out of choice, and they go to school without choice," said Yair Feldmann of the Advertisers' Association. "But advertising on television, in the street, on the Internet. It's part of our world."

Others doubt the government's ability to exercise strict controls. "They've created a committee to determine what is appropriate advertising," said Eli Rachmut, chair of the parents association at the Tali Bayit Vagan school in Jerusalem. "Do they really think the only one to advertise will be the Hebrew Encyclopedia? This is a completely absurd solution to a serious problem."

And what do the children have to say? Some have been quoted in the Hebrew papers saying the idea is a good one because their schools will benefit financially. But Ilana Trachtenberg, a Jerusalem sixth grader, thinks otherwise. "I don't think advertising belongs in a school," she said. "School is a place for learning and a place to let your brain grow, not to fill it with garbage."

WHILE most Israelis have trouble understanding their feelings towards the state of the peace process today, several pollsters are trying to figure out what they feel about tomorrow. They have all, by chance, released their findings during the past two weeks.

The most ambitious is a 300-page survey by Elihu Katz and Shlomit Levy of the Guttman Center of Applied Social Research on "the status of Jerusalem in the eyes of Israeli Jews." It took a year to collate the data gathered from an exhaustive series of 100 questions from September 1995 to January 1996. The study showed that 80% refused to negotiate on Jerusalem. The assassination of prime minister Yitzhak Rabin in the middle of the survey apparently did little to change that statistic.

But that is just the beginning. What Israelis consider to be essential are the Jewish parts of the city only. When the 1,530 interviewees were asked whether a specific area "is important to you as part of Jerusalem," the Western Wall scored over 90%, other older Jewish areas more than 80%, and post-1967 Jewish neighborhoods more than 70%. But non-Jewish quarters of the Old City scored around 40%, downtown Arab areas closer to 30% and outlying Arab villages annexed to Jerusalem made it not quite as far as 30%.

More significant still, in each category the results were fairly uniform among different urban, ethnic and political sectors of Israeli society. One anomaly was that Jerusalem residents showed much less interest in the Old City and the Temple Mount than Israelis as a whole. "Jerusalem is less symbolic to Jerusalemites than to Tel Avivians, but Tel Aviv is more flexible in considering all kinds of options in negotiations," said Levy.

The solution: "59% of Jews are ready to redefine the [city's] boundaries to make Jerusalem more Jewish," says University of Maryland professor Jerome Segal, who participated in the survey and has written extensively about how to build a Palestinian state. Answers to another question indicated that, once Jerusalem is redefined, 45% are willing to "transfer to Palestinian sovereignty the Arab settlements and villages previously in the West Bank. Even more interesting is that 34% are willing to transfer 'Arab neighborhoods of East Jerusalem, except those that are inside the walls, to Palestinian sovereignty.'"

When the question replaces "Palestinian sovereignty" with "special status under Palestinian control," there is no change in support. It may be that Palestinian sovereignty is interpreted by interviewees to mean no more than today's existing area A in Nabulus or Ramallah. That would appear to be the case, since only 33% of the interviewees actually support a Palestinian state.

However, there is little connection between what people want (which is what most polls ask) and what they expect. This survey did ask, and 78% said that they think there will be a Palestinian state. The pollsters did not ask a similar question concerning negotiations on Jerusalem. While only 20% support negotiations on Jerusalem at all, the answers to many other questions imply that many more think there is something to negotiate and that negotiations will happen anyway.

POLLS BY Modi'in Ezrahi and the Palestinian Jerusalem Media and Communication Center (JMCC) tackle the Beilin-Abu

A spate of recent polls reveals unexpected sentiments, Jon Immanuel writes

Mazen plan, though with much less detail than the Guttman survey on Jerusalem. Ezrahi conducted 1,046 interviews between November 12 and December 3 and asked questions on the six issues in the plan. Support for keeping all Jerusalem under Israeli sovereignty, with the Islamic sites on the Temple Mount under Palestinian control and a Palestinian capital in Abu Dis, was 53.8%. Abu Dis, just outside Jerusalem, is clearly not dissimilar to the "outlying Arab areas" in the Guttman report that it said some 45% of Israelis would not object to seeing under Palestinian control.

However, support for a Palestinian capital there is far smaller in the Guttman report, floating somewhere between 20% who think "the Palestinians' claim for East Jerusalem as a capital justified" and 39% who believe Palestinians "have any sort of legitimate rights" in Jerusalem. If

Jerusalemites showed much less interest in the Old City and the Temple Mount than Israelis as a whole

Palestinian Jerusalem had been redefined as centered on Abu Dis, maybe more Guttman interviewees would have supported a Palestinian capital there.

The two Israeli polls are upbeat on Jerusalem. But it takes two to tango, as Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat says, and the JMCC poll asking the same question on Jerusalem as Ezrahi among 1,152 Palestinians on December 13 and 14 elicits support from 9% only. If the JMCC poll had also thrown in Sur Bahir, Umm Tuba, Beit Hanina, Shuafat and other areas that a near majority of Israelis say they can live without, that 9% might have increased considerably and the negotiating difference between the two partners reduced.

In fact, the differences on Jerusalem - touted as the most difficult issue - appear in the polls to be potentially smaller than several other issues of the final agreement. Ezrahi asks directly which of the six Beilin-Abu Mazen proposals interviewees most support and which they support least. The results reflect the ambiguity of Guttman's finding that there is a knee-jerk opposition to negotiating on Jerusalem and yet flexibility about Jerusalem's future. So Jerusalem scored highest on

"least" supported proposal, but surprisingly it scored third on "most" supported, after obvious winners like holding the Jordan river as a security border and annexing most settlers.

TAKE SETTLEMENTS, for example. Ezrahi's poll demands a yes-or-no answer to the proposal that Israel annex settlement blocs close to the Green Line and give Palestinians a large chunk of desert near the Egyptian border. Among Jews, 57.1% agree, but the JMCC found only 6.7% of Palestinians agreed and Gazans least of all (4.1%).

The JMCC asks an additional question. If Israel would settle for Palestinian sovereignty over the settlements on condition that settlers could remain in them, support goes up to 30.5% in the West Bank. That is as close as Palestinians come to supporting anything like a proposal of the Beilin-Abu Mazen "plan." The Modi'in Ezrahi poll also asks whether those settlers who are not annexed to Israel should be able to stay as Israeli citizens under Palestinian rule with adequate security safeguards. It finds 37.9% say yes. The two polls would dovetail nicely if Palestinians were to define a Palestinian state as covering only 90% of the West Bank and not 100%, a question that has not been asked because it is too delicate and would probably score very low in the current circumstances.

Nevertheless, Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat claims that under current agreements the Palestinian Authority is supposed to receive "91% of the West Bank" as area A and B. That still leaves plenty of negotiating room in the final talks for Palestinians. They can concentrate on strengthening Palestinian authority in that 90%, turning remaining B areas into A areas and A areas into full statehood areas. Israel can tell the Palestinians they get a state (and Negev land), but Israel takes 10% off the top.

DO ISRAELIS want a Palestinian state? Demilitarized, of course. Ezrahi's respondents say yes to the tune of 49%, which logically falls between Guttman's 33% who support a state and 78% who think it will happen anyway. The assumption held by interviewees in the Ezrahi questionnaire is that the Palestinian state will occupy some 90% of the West Bank and many small settlements (where settlers may remain) but retain full security control on the Jordan border and keep early-warning stations on the central hills. The return of refugees to the Palestinian state is accepted by 53.8% in the Ezrahi poll, while 19.4% in the JMCC poll accept that solution. But neither asks whether refugees who do not return should be compensated for homes lost in 1948 "as recognition of their right in principle," which would have raised Palestinian support. In the Ezrahi poll, the "don't know" fall between 10% and 13% on each

(Continued on Page 12)

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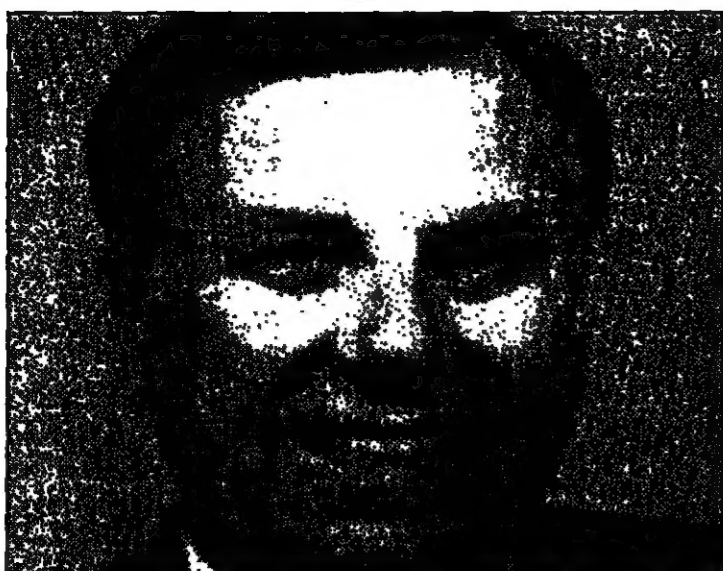
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Rep. Callahan: I'm not coming to cut aid

Sonny Callahan, new chairman of the US Congressional subcommittee on foreign aid allocations, arrives here today, Hillel Kuttler writes from Washington



Callahan drives a hard bargain, but he's not hostile on aid.

SONNY Callahan wants to call off the alarms. Yes, the Alabama congressman helped slash foreign assistance funding as soon as he and fellow Republicans assumed power in 1995. True, he once proposed, maybe only slightly tongue-in-cheek, a \$1 billion cut in foreign aid to offset that which he estimates his district sends to Washington in annual federal income tax. And there was his published quote comparing foreign aid to changing a baby's diaper - "It's necessary but it's not the most rewarding part of parenthood."

But, on the eve of his first-ever visit to Israel, the seven-term Republican doesn't see what all the fuss is about.

"We're not on a mission to give any indication of any cut to Israel or to Egypt or to Africa or to Jordan or to any other country," he said before the start of his 10-day trip, which begins today. "Our mission should not be construed, nor do I intend to bring up, any cuts."

The stocky chairman of the House foreign operations subcommittee that controls foreign aid allocations is leading an eight-member CODEL - Washington-speak for a Congressional delegation - on a foray that also includes Egypt, Jordan and Morocco.

"Our mission is to make certain that we understand each other, that we have common goals. As the appropriators, we are the ones who have to answer the questions to our colleagues in the Congress," Callahan says.

He and committee members want to assure themselves that American aid to the region is well spent, although, he says reassuringly, "we have no reason to

believe it's not."

Callahan's other specific goal is "to shore up the prime minister, to let him know that he still has the support of the people of the US and the Congress. Just as we suppose the people of Israel support President Clinton, he's our elected leader."

While the group is to meet with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Callahan doesn't know whether they'll see Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat this time. He doesn't mind if it has to wait for a subsequent trip. "We've got a very tight itinerary and a very limited amount of time. If Mr. Arafat would like to see us, he should express such an interest, as the prime minister has."

CALLAHAN IS known in Congress for his blunt style. His direct approach occasionally confronted the Middle East during the last session of Congress, his first as subcommittee chairman.

Callahan was as responsible as anyone for a month-long delay in writing off Jordan's debt to the US that Clinton promised King Hussein while the 1994 Jordan-Israel peace treaty was being negotiated. The dispute embarrassed the administration, but an unrepentant Callahan also held up the transfer of used F-16 planes to Amman last year. And in March, Callahan was none too thrilled when Clinton offered Jerusalem \$100 million in high-technology anti-terrorism equipment follow-

ing the Sharm el-Sheikh summit. "If he expects us to continue coming up with this money that he goes out and promises, then let me tell you, I'm not excited about it one bit," Callahan told *The Jerusalem Post* at the time.

For Callahan, those stands don't signal any hostility to the region, but are a principled message to Congressional appropriators before passing out more American taxpayers' dollars.

The previous Israeli ambassador, Itamar Rabinovich, calls Callahan a "challenge to convert" towards supporting the last two foreign aid bills. He had previously voted for some aid bills and against others. "Callahan is someone who leads you to think [he's] just a country hick, but he's a very smart guy. You can reason with him. He's interesting and fascinating," says Rabinovich. The two are friends and will dine together in Jerusalem this week.

"Callahan drives a hard bargain, but he's not hostile to foreign aid in general and foreign aid to Israel in particular," said Democratic congressman Howard Berman, who knows Callahan well. There are those pro-Israel observers in the US who also call Callahan a charming man and a friend of Israel, but doubt whether he really has a world view.

The truth is that he does, but it is shaped more by the Constitution than by the globe. Callahan believes

that the president and secretary of state reserve the right to chart US foreign policy. Aside from consultations with the executive branch, he wants Congress to butt out.

For that reason, he refuses to state his view of Clinton's recent criticism of Israel's new settlement policy. "Too many members of Congress. I think, have presented themselves to be members of the [administration], to be pseudo-secretaries of state," he says.

Having already trimmed the foreign aid budget by more than 10 percent, to about \$12.2 billion, Callahan says the administration has the prerogative to spend it any way it sees fit. He says he has no problem with Israel and Egypt together getting more than 40 percent of the foreign aid budget, although he doesn't see how he can "squeeze the rest of the world to benefit the Middle East."

Callahan could even see himself consenting to providing aid to Syria as part of a peace deal, if the administration deemed it vital and offset those funds with reductions elsewhere. "If they came to me and told me this is absolutely necessary, who am I to try to second-guess all the nations that would be involved?" he asks.

Callahan also says he will not pressure Netanyahu to outline how he plans to begin weaning Israel off American aid, which he pledged in an address to Congress last July. But, on the other hand, Callahan says, "I think Mr. Netanyahu and others recognize - or at least I hope they do - that aid to any country is not an entitlement, that we are providing aid to make certain you have a strong economy, to make certain [it] will facilitate the peace process."

"The reason for the appropriations is not out of benevolence, it's out of a simple want of world peace."

To Callahan, everything always seems to come down to taxes. For a while, he lived in the Washington marina on a motor yacht - not on a houseboat, he hastens to add, since the latter is subject to property taxes. But he sold the yacht last summer and now wants to purchase another one so that whenever he leaves public life, "all I have to do is untie the lines and move."

"I'm in the market," he says, "and I might look when I'm in Israel. There might be some yachts over there I might buy."



Dealing with difficult journalists

'Keep it short, formulate your message in 45 seconds,' exhorted media trainer Alan Rappoport. "Avoid jargon. Think before you talk. Know where to put your hands."

Sitting around a table, a dozen Israeli diplomats, representing their country across the US, listened intently as Rappoport explained the care and feeding of the often unruly beast known collectively as the American media.

The mostly young diplomats, responsible for public information, press relations, cultural affairs and academic liaison at the nine consulates in the US, displayed their media scars: How a Miami reporter had misrepresented the consul's statement. How a hostile talk-show host had sandbagged an Israeli guest. How one small-town reporter was ignorant of the most basic facts about the Middle East. How, in a panel discussion, she was constantly interrupted by other panelists.

Rappoport, whose expertise is in damage control after a corporation or government agency has stumbled into a public-relations disaster, put his pupils through in one-on-one virtual TV interviews.

He gave practical tips, like "clip the mike on your tie one fist below the chin" and "don't let your glasses slide down your nose."

His broader rules were often more difficult to apply. "Use humor in correcting a false statement. Make sure the reporter explicitly agrees when you speak on background. Use personal pronouns, not the passive voice."

Try to use concrete examples to illustrate abstract policies, urged the trainer. One consul said he had encountered difficulties with a reporter who felt economic ties with Arab countries deteriorated because of the new Israeli government's harder-line policies.

Tom Tugend reports from Los Angeles on how Israeli consuls learn to promote the country

Rather than go down the reporters path, advised one of his colleagues, pick a specific binational project and point out that 400 Egyptians or Jordanians are now employed thanks to an Israeli initiative.

Each of the participants faced special problems, based on his or her location and personality, but none encountered as much personal media interest as Belaynesh Zevadia, the vice consul for public affairs in Chicago.

As Israel's first diplomat of Ethiopian descent, Zevadia said, "I am Jewish, black and a woman, so I am conscious that I must work very hard to set a good example."

Consuls based in the US meet once a year, but for the first time the two-day session, attended by 30 officials, was held on the West Coast.

This choice of venue reflected recognition by Israel of the growing importance of the Western states, said Ya'acov Levy, deputy director general for public affairs at the Foreign Ministry.

"It was important for Israeli diplomats to get a feel for California as the country's largest and most important political state and the center of the entertainment industry," added Consul-General Yoram Ben-Ze'ev, headquartered in Los Angeles.

Uri Bar-Ner, the Foreign Ministry's top official for cultural relations, met with movie execu-

tives to plan Hollywood's participation in Israel's 50th anniversary celebrations in 1998.

Among plans are a major gala in Los Angeles, under the direction of Gilbert Cates, producer of the annual Academy Awards, to be broadcast across the world, said Ido Aharoni of the L.A. consulate.

In an interview, Bar-Ner stressed the increasing importance of artistic exchanges with the US.

"Culture has become the No. 1 vehicle for reaching not only the Jewish community but Americans in general," he said. "One great Israeli performance is better than 1,000 ambassadors."

One talk by novelist Amos Oz "can present Israel better than any one else in showing what kind of people we really are," said Bar-Ner. While political relations between Israel and foreign nations may fluctuate, he added, "cultural relations, once set up, continue."

Rappoport, the intense, fast-talking media consultant, has been conducting training sessions for Israeli officials, pro bono, for the last five years. He enjoys his Israeli "students" and said that their main problem when meeting the media is their over-eagerness.

"They are so pleased when they meet an open-minded journalist, they are like puppies, panting to go," he commented. "I try to teach them to slow down, to formulate their thoughts before speaking." The problem has intensified over the last few months, as much of the American media has resumed its critical stance toward Israel, after the long honeymoon following the Oslo agreements.

Israeli spokesmen often react to such renewed negative-media attitudes by "jumping in both feet first," said Rappoport, rather than taking a deep breath and then coming back with a cool, pithy response.

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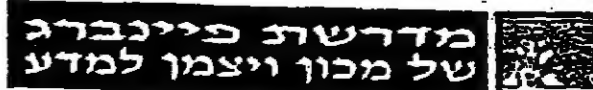
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When Jonathan Swift met Haim Ramon

CAUGHT by a sudden thunderstorm while traveling across England, Jonathan Swift hid under a tree, where he was soon joined by a thug-like-looking man and an extremely pregnant woman. Expecting though the woman evidently was, she and the man were on their way to their wedding, and due to the unexpected circumstances they asked Swift - who was as a priest, as well as a famous author - to wed them.

Swift happily complied, but the thick-voiced groom demanded to be furnished with some documentation which would attest to the couple's wedlock. The writer immediately rose to the occasion and scribbled on a piece of paper: *Under an oak in stormy weather I joined the rogue and whore together.*

And none but he who rules the thunder
Can put this rogue and whore asunder.

Those of us who might have been impressed with MK Haim Ramon's much-heralded and typically impassioned don't-vote-Barak speech this week - where he drew an analogy between Swift's 270-year-old classic *Gulliver's Travels* and Ehud Barak's two-year-old political career - would do well to seek a

metaphoric Ramon under that wind-swept English tree.

In other words, even if - as his political nemesis suggests - Barak is becoming increasingly entangled in a web of commitments to self-serving dwarfs, it's time we realized Ramon is a frivolous opportunist, political gambler, ideological impostor and a downright dangerous man.

His finest hour, no doubt, was when he dealt a knock-out two years ago to the Histadrut's ancient bureaucracy following the stagnant, anachronistic and corrupt organization's refusal to heed his advice and detach health care from politics. Back then, Ramon loomed tall as an unconventional Labor politician fully aware of unionism's global demise and privatization's historic dawn, and willing to put his head on the line to promote his beliefs.

Unfortunately, once victorious Ramon quickly lost interest in his new fiefdom, and after Yitzhak Rabin's assassination he abruptly abandoned his job as Histadrut chairman and joined the new government, in a memorable act of political deceit on the scale of that performed by those unreconstructed Romanian communists who impersonated principled revolutionaries only to uphold

ON THE AGENDA

AMOTZ ASA-EL

Nicolae Ceausescu's legacy.

Today Ramon says he was compelled at the time by Shimon Peres's plea to join the post-assassination cabinet. Unfortunately, Peres himself has yet to confirm this version. Moreover, if he is the principled man he claims to be, Ramon should simply have told Peres he had a commitment to thousands of workers who had bestowed on him a five-year term in office.

If anyone still harbored thoughts that Ramon cared a fig for the workers' plight, his conspicuous silence during the recent labor upheaval proved the whole issue was never truly close to his heart. Ramon merely detected the widespread abhorrence Israelis harbored for the Histadrut and decided to tap it, and then use that rage as a springboard from which to leap to national leadership contention.

Ramon's light-headed character surfaced ominously also during last year's general elections, where he headed his party's famously disastrous campaign.

First, then-interior minister Ramon systematically sidelined then-foreign minister Barak, who

of pure pettiness and jealousy. In the few TV appearances Ramon allowed him, Barak emerged as Labor's most - perhaps only - effective campaigner. Though he was unlikely to overturn the deeply perplexed, fatigued and terrorism-haunted public's skepticism, Barak was at least fully aware of the widespread disillusionment with Peres's New Middle East vision, which he never fully shared to begin with.

Ramon, meanwhile, preferred to indulge in denial and, perceiving himself as a master electioneer, dictated a campaign policy aimed at putting the public to sleep.

Then, when TV's first exit polls rolled out, Ramon - like a starry-eyed gambler shouting in enthusiasm well before the spinning roulette wheel has finally ground to a halt - hastily declared Peres's victory. More sober politicians, like Yossi Beilin, immediately understood the gravity of Labor's condition and said they would first wait for the final results.

In the aftermath of Labor's electoral debacle, Ramon understood he had no chance in a head-on clash with Barak. And so, like those Romanian pseudo-revolutionaries of 1989, his efforts turned to assuming the guise of a superdemocrat out to stop on his tracks a cowardly Barak, who

wouldn't allow "the entire public" to participate in Labor's primaries.

Ramon now says Barak is surrounded by "hacks," but the fact is that between the two of them it is he, Ramon, who has spent an entire career roaming the infamous corridors of his party's Hayarkon Street headquarters, while the good soldier Barak splashed in sweat, mud and blood anywhere between Lebanon and the Suez Canal.

In fact, besides being disingenuous and devious, Ramon's proposal, if implemented, would instill anarchy in Israeli politics.

"Open primaries" would have called for massive manipulations, where people who do not identify with a particular party would nevertheless set out to determine its fate. Ramon knows that anyone who wants to can pay a membership fee, join Labor and participate in its primary elections. Apparently, the more prosaic intention lurking behind his "open primaries" slogan was his hope to mobilize thousands of Shas voters, to be "delivered" by his buddy Aryeh Deri.

Fortunately, unlike the one who met Jonathan Swift, this rogue and his companions can be put asunder, as they indeed were in Labor's convention this week.

Dry Bones



Being worthy of redemption

SHABBAT SHALOM
SHLOMO RISKIN

ARE we at the end of a historic period in modern Jewish history? Is the State of Israel only a passing episode? The Six Day War reunited us with sites such as Bethlehem, Hebron, Shechem, and even the Old City of Jerusalem. Even former anti-Zionists agreed that this represented "the beginning of the sprouting of our redemption."

But prime minister Yitzhak Rabin's tragic assassination still casts a pall over the land. With the expected retreat of the Israeli army from Hebron - which in turn follows the earlier redeployments from Shechem and Bethlehem - it seems that much of what had been given to the Jewish people is slipping through our fingers. Was it all just a temporary opening of the gates to give us a glimpse of what we apparently are not yet worthy of achieving?

But is such despair a valid response? The opening of our portion, Va'era, is really the continuation of a dialogue from the end of last week's portion, in which Moses asks God: "Why have You sent me? For since I came to Pharaoh to speak in Your name, he has dealt ill with this people. Neither have You delivered Your people at all" (Ex. 5:22-23).

Moses is ready to quit. God promised redemption - a message the prophet repeats to his people - "but they hearkened not unto Moses because of impatience of spirit, and cruel bondage" (Ex. 6:9). According to most commentators, the "impatience of spirit" refers to the Jews' reaction to Pharaoh's harsher edicts.

But one major commentator, the Raibag (R. Levi ben Gershon, 1288-1344) takes a radically different approach. He identifies the impatience of spirit (kotzer ruah) as referring to Moses! The children of Israel were not convinced because Moses was too preoccupied with the Divine to spend the time needed to adequately prepare his message and inspire the people. Hence, Moses could not, or would not, get his nation to accept its destiny.

Rabbi Ya'akov Karminetzky in his work *Emet L'Ya'akov*, suggests another reason for the people's skepticism. Last week we read the words of Pharaoh's command: "Let heavier work be laid upon the men that they may labor therein, and let them not regard (yishu) lying words" (Ex. 5:9). Rav Ya'akov quotes a Midrash that speaks of ancient scrolls in the possession of the Israelites, which they would study every Sabbath, even during their servitude. The Midrash links the word yishu, which can either mean "to regard" or "to delight in," with the verse: "Were not the Torah my delight (sha'ashu'i), I would have perished in my affliction" (Psalms 119:92).

The Israelites found respite from their rigorous labor as well as spiritual refreshment from their Torah study, part of which, Rav Ya'akov theorizes, must have been Psalm 92, which is called Mizmor Shir

Leyorn Hashabat. After all, this chapter does not deal with the Sabbath at all. Its theme is faith in the righteousness of God, despite the depth of one's suffering. Hence it must be a psalm not "of the Sabbath" but rather "for the Sabbath" - a psalm which would inspire Jews to continue believing in the ultimate redemption despite the travail of Egyptian bondage.

But since they were now forced to work on the Sabbath, and no longer had the opportunity to "delight in the psalm for the Sabbath," they stopped "hearing" Moses' message.

Now we can speak of *sheva'rasa*, why the Jewish people didn't listen to Moses. The physical suffering, the spiritual void which was not filled with uplifting biblical texts, and the inability of the leadership to come down to their level in order to raise them.

The citizens of Israel today are in a similar position. But another message from the Torah puts all of this in a radically different perspective.

According to the Talmud (B.T. Pesachim, Ch. 10, Mishna 1), four cups of wine are required for the seder, corresponding to four expressions of redemption with which our portion opens: (1) "I will bring (vehotzti) you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and (2) I will deliver (vehitzalti) you from their bondage, and (3) I will redeem (vega'alti) you with an outstretched arm... and (4) I will take (velakhti) you to Me for a people..." (Ex. 6:6-7).

According to conventional wisdom, these active verbs represent four "languages" of redemption. The Jerusalem Talmud, however, describes four distinct and unique redemptions, not merely four stages of one redemption.

The difference in interpretation creates two distinct ways of relating to the world. If we are dealing with four aspects of one redemption, any setback can mean that the entire enterprise was an illusion. But if we are involved in separate redemptions, it is understandable that there will be quiescent and even retrogressive periods.

Was not the creation of the state a redemption in and of itself? Was not the miraculous liberation of Jerusalem during the Six Day War another redemption? Is not the ingathering of exiles one of the great miracles of Jewish history?

We may experience setbacks and disappointments, but this is only a natural part of "normative messianism" - a redemption dependent on military, political and democratic processes.

In the meantime, it is our task to become worthy - politically, ethically and spiritually - of a period of peace and harmony within and outside our state. We must never lose sight of - or cease to thank the Almighty for providing us with - the redemptions we have already experienced in this greatest adventure of our people in at least 2,000 years.

Shabbat Shalom.

'Strangers in our midst'

A VIEW FROM NOV
MOSHE KOHN

UNTIL DR. Baruch Goldstein murdered 29 Arab worshippers and wounded dozens in the Machpelah Cave that Purim 5754/1994 morning, he was widely loved by his patients and their families, Jews and Arabs alike. He was loved for his professionalism and, above all, his compassion and gentleness.

A graduate of New York's Yeshiva University, he had had a relatively broad and deep Jewish and general education, and he surely knew the Torah's and other teachings about decent behavior towards all fellow humans. The love he earned attests that he had internalized these teachings.

Yet we shall never know what caused Goldstein, in his mid-30s, to overcome the inhibitions those teachings had surely implanted in him. We shall never know what fear and mad sense of mission possessed him that morning to strangle the humaneness in him and overrule a basic Torah and general principle: those Arabs he apparently intended to punish pre-emptively were not culpable or even threatening at that moment (see *Bereishit Rabba* 53:14 on Genesis 21:17).

Noam Friedman, 22, described as having "serious mental problems and personality disorders" (*The Jerusalem Post*, December 2 and 3), apparently had fewer, if any, inhibitions to overcome before opening fire and wounding six Arabs in Hebron's cashah last week. His psychic condition surely had prevented him from paying attention to and internalizing any ethical/moral lessons he had very likely been taught at Jerusalem's Horev school, under Rabbi Mordechai Elon's tutelage.

On the other hand, it is quite clear what moves some of our government leaders and bureaucrats, some of them wearing the garb and appearances commonly identified with Torah, to violate basic Torah tenets regarding human relations.

The citizen, in general, counts for little in the eyes of many of them, but here I have in mind their harassment of innocent, law-abiding "strangers in our midst" - i.e. non-Jewish residents and visitors.

I refer specifically to us (since we are a democracy, those officials are us) less-than-noble treatment of mobilized Druse and Beduin members of our security forces.

I refer to our less-than-noble treatment of Arabs in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza District and Druse in the Golan Heights who since 1967 - often at risk to their and their families' wellbeing - have given vital help to our security

authorities. Regarded as "collaborators" (with the "Zionist enemy"), they are ostracized (when they are not lynched) by their own communities and treated as virtual enemies by us.

I refer to our less-than-noble treatment of non-Israeli professional and volunteer personnel of Christian organizations and institutions - notably such groups as the Jerusalem-based Bridges for Peace, Christian Friends of Israel, Ecumenical Theological Research Fraternity and International Christian Embassy, and the Ness Amim communal settlement in Galilee - conducting various eleemosynary activities among all sectors of our society, some of them also performing vital pro-Israel educational and propaganda tasks among their tens of millions of constituents, supporters and contacts here and in the rest of the world.

You find them in continuing care wards of our hospitals and hospices for the terminally ill performing tasks that would otherwise go undone. They provide extensive material help to immigrants from the former Soviet Union and Ethiopia. Abroad they are bringing a positive message about Israel to circles that our own official propaganda agencies haven't tried to reach, or couldn't reach if they tried.

Yet when these personnel have to renew their visas, or when one of these institutions seeks a visa for a new volunteer, the Interior Ministry often treats them virtually as subversive elements - and who knows that this treatment does alienate some of them.

Part of the problem is rooted in the classic stereotypical behavior of government officials, treating all clients equally in a manner ranging from indifference to disdain. There are some bureaucrats, "even" here, who overcome this attitude when the client comes "recommended" or offers a "favor" - sometimes spontaneously, sometimes in response to a most unsuitable hint by the official.

Another part of the problem is a morbid attitude to non-Jews ranging from fear through suspicion to antipathy: non-Jews who like us or help us are regarded as psychically disturbed, or as out to convert us or otherwise exploit us

for their own ends.

In any event, certainly in the instance of our Orthodox-dominated Interior Ministry, the problem is not that the officials involved had a poor education in Jewish law and values, and are not aware of the Jewish teachings concerning treatment of the "stranger in our midst."

WHAT IS A Jew taught, what should a Jew be taught, regarding treatment of one's fellow human beings, including non-Jews?

Scores of times the Torah and the other books of the Tanach lay down both ritual and ethical/moral precepts specifically as reminders of, or by virtue of the fact that we were once strangers/slaves in Egypt and God delivered us from slavery.

For example, in the identical language in which the Torah commands us to "Love thy neighbor as thyself" (Leviticus 19:18) it commands us, "...love (the stranger) as yourself" (Leviticus 19:18, 33-37; Deuteronomy 10:19).

We recall with horror our enslavement in Egypt, yet we are to remember that the Egyptians were not only our slave-masters but also our hosts, and therefore we must "not despise the Egyptian" (Deuteronomy 23:8 with Rashi's comment).

The talmudic Sage Rabbi Yohanan warns us: If you harass your brother gentile, you will end up harassing your brother Jew (*Devarim Rabbah* 6:9).

Rabbi Moshe of Coucy, 13th-century author of *Sefer Mizvo' Gadol*, teaches: Those who lie to gentiles or rob them are committing blasphemy, for it is because of them that people call the Jews a lawless people.

THE ABOVE are but a most minuscule sampling of the voluminous teachings of the Tanach, the Talmud and later Jewish authorities concerning common decency among people, both Jew-to-Jew and Jew-to-gentile.

It would require an extensive study in psychopathology to explain why, ever since the days of the biblical Prophets, so many people raised on those teachings, people wearing the badge of Torah, flout those teachings while they are tremblingly scrupulous about the distance between meat and milk and the sharpness of the point of their lulav. (This musings was inspired by a conversation with Dr. M. Bernard Resnikoff of Jerusalem.)

Where's the tooth fairy for the poor?

ROOT canals, crowns, capplings, fillings, gum work and plates. For some people these are just technical terms associated with dentistry, but for me, they highlight requests pouring into our office for help.

The last few months have seen an unbelievable demand for financial assistance to cope with dental problems.

Dental work, not covered by health funds, creates insurmountable problems when poor families are asked to pay out thousands of shekels for urgent treatment. And we all know how important that dental work can be when we can't sleep because of pain.

This is an urgent appeal to help me answer the hundreds of requests for help from children who need extractions - from teenagers embarrassed by the fact that they need capplings or braces, and from the elderly who eat only soft foods because they can't afford dentures.

Please rush your money in today. Even if you've donated before, give again to help us "bridge the gap." Send your checks to: The Jerusalem Post Funds, P.O. Box 81, Jerusalem 91000.

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NIS 165 Remembering beloved parents, Regina (76) and Joseph (90) Melzer, who always helped those in need - daughter Lena, Haifa.
NIS 150 In memory of Granny Rose - Brodie Family, Herzliya Bet.
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\$279.50
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NIS 500 In honor of my newest grandson David Meir Morrell - Bruno DiCort, J'm.
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NIS 250 From Howard Radley, in the

name of the I.C.C. International Network of Accountants and Lawyers.
NIS 200 Dr. Paul Acohen, 12141 Malachi, Betty and Martin Mayer, J'm.
NIS 180 In honor of my grandchildren: Arbel, Camille and Gilad Rabina; Le'ad and Dor Zilbert; Ady and Inbar Goldberg - Laimoth and Arthur Goldberg, Herzliya Pithah.
NIS 150 In memory of Granny Rose - Brodie Family, Herzliya Bet.
NIS 100 In honor of the 40th anniversary of Pauline and Geoffrey Green on January 8 - Doris and Nahum Haimson, Ashkelon. In honor of our grandchildren - Jack and Shirley Bitman, Ashkelon. In honor of the bar mitzva of Bradley Krasnoshteyn - Doris and Nahum Haimson.

NIS 72 Burton Halpern, Tel Aviv.
NIS 54 In memory of Arnold Levy - Netanya.
NIS 40 To raise a smile on a child's face - Lena, Haifa.

NIS 35 In honor of our dear granddaughter, Danielle Sacha Wolf from South Africa - Freda and Dov Boston, Netanya.
NIS 224 Temple Beth Elotim, Old Bethpage, NY.
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NIS 66 From Mrs. Bragger's 6th and 3rd grade classes at Melvin Gelman Religious School of Adas Israel Congregation, Washington, D.C.
NIS 60 In memory of Angelo Marano - Virginia Horanman, Phoenix, AZ.
NIS 50 In honor of our children, twins David Israel and Rachel Ilana (age 12) and Sarah Rada (age 8), who give Tzedaka each week - Sheldon and Jeanne Waxman, San

Francisco. In honor of grandchildren: Yochved, Shlomo, Esther, Rivka and Reita of Tetz Stone - William Benswanger, Pittsburgh.
NIS 40 Blanche and Louis Carr, Houston, TX.
NIS 35 Ruth and Bernard Simon, NYC.
NIS 27 In honor of my grandson Shlomo's bar mitzva - A.A. Tenenck, NJ.
NIS 18 David Marini, Oakland, CA.
NIS 10 From my Hanukkah gelt - Avi Margolin (age 12), Piedmont, CA. From my Hanukkah gelt - Devorah Margolin (age 10), Piedmont, CA.

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No impediments to marriage of true minds

IT was definitely a pedigreed union in Jerusalem last week when Rosie Landau, daughter of Monique and Ervin Landau of London, married Gary Leibler, son of Naomi and Isi Leibler of Melbourne. The bride is descended on her father's side from one of the great leaders of 18th-century European Jewry, Rabbi Yechzekel Landau, the Rabbi of Prague known for his monumental work *Noda B'yehuda*. The groom's father was the President of the Executive Council of Australian Jewry, his uncle Mark Leibler was the president of the Zionist Federation of Australia, his paternal grandmother Rachel Leibler was the founder of Australian Emunah. His late paternal grandfather Abraham Shmuel Leibler, was a leader of the Mizrahi movement and president of the Victorian Jewish Board of Deputies. His late maternal grandfather, Jerusalem-born Rabbi Israel Porush, was the long-time spiritual leader of the Sydney Great Synagogue and the head of the Sydney Beit Din. The couple timed their wedding to coincide with the Australian summer vacation period. The oldest jester leading the large contingent of Australians was the groom's maternal grandfather, nonagenarian Bertha Porush, for whom this was the third trip to Israel in a 12-month period. Other Australians who made the long flight included Eva and Mark Besem, Pauline and John Gandel, Professor Louis and Wendy Waller, Hans and Gini Bachrach, Bert and Haya Mond plus numerous other relatives and friends. Locals in attendance included World Mizrahi elder statesman Yosef Burg, who turns 88 at the end of this month, Education Minister Zevulun Hammer, Finance Minister Dan Meridor, Immigrant Absorption Minister Yuli Edelstein, former

justice minister Ya'acov Ne'eman, Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert, Channel 2 director-general Nahman Shai, noted educator Rabbi Adin Steinsaltz, plus the heads of many world-renowned yeshivot. The first member of his immediate family to make his home in Jerusalem, the groom paved the way for more than a dozen of his relatives who have since settled in the capital. The bride's father, who said he had been waiting a long time for his daughter to find the man who could capture her heart, found him to be what the rest of the family also had

**GRAPEVINE
GREER FAY CASHMAN**

of the upper-echelon clergy at the Vatican also cover their heads.

FORMER MACCABI Tel Aviv basketball stars are returning to the limelight. First there was the news about Arik Perry rehabilitating himself by flipping hamburgers in Tel Aviv. Next in line is old teammate and ex-superstar Tai Brody, who is the new image in the Ace "do it yourself" advertising campaign. Brody has several things

opportunities. It is Brody, who through Maccabi Tel Aviv put Israel on the international basketball map.

NOTHING IS more convincing than being endorsed by one's adversaries. Yossi Beilin, who has cast his hat into the Labor leadership ring, is having his praises sung by Ariel Local Council chairman and former Likud MK Ron Nahman, who, though he disagrees with him, calls him a politician with integrity. Similar sentiments were expressed by Finance Minister Dan Meridor when he appeared in a debate with Beilin before the last elections.

HIDDEN AGENDA. There's more to the prime minister's withdrawal of the Broadcasting Authority's budget from the Knesset Finance Committee than meets the eye. Drastic budget cuts would mean that the IBA would have to fix its \$2.5 million a year contract with G.G. Studios whose owner Yoram Globus and CEO Uri Porat, who is also a former IBA director general, are staunch Likud supporters and personal friends of Benjamin Netanyahu. Moreover G.G. produced the Likud campaign broadcasts which may have had some effect in putting Bibi into office. So while Avigdor Lieberman, director-general of the Prime Minister's Office, may be in a hurry to change the status quo at the IBA, his boss is looking at the wider picture.

THOSE PEOPLE pressing for squeaky-clean government should be asking whether it is right during a municipal election year for candidates to have their own radio programs or to appear weekly on television as members of a team of political commentators. Yehoram Gonen, who is a member of the Jerusalem Municipal Council,

hosts a weekly current-affairs program on Israel Radio, and Roni Milo, who is seeking a second term as mayor of Tel Aviv, is almost but not quite a permanent fixture on Saturday Game hosted by Menashe Raz. One might also ask whether it is correct for the Jerusalem city councilman to appear in the telephone commercials on TV, even though he's appearing in his more familiar guise, as a singer.

WHILE SINGLE Jewish women on the whole outnumber single Jewish men, the latter cannot always find a bride. Take for instance the students at the Gutnick Center. Most are well-educated Russian scientists who are catching up on their Judaism. They would love to get married, but they can't find enough Russian-speaking young women who are interested in living an Orthodox life-style. Thus when Rachel Farkash, wife of center director Rabbi Yekutiel Farkash, last week met Hannah Lazar, wife of Rabbi Berl Lazar, who heads the Habad outreach operations in Moscow, the first question that she asked her was "do you have any girls for us?" The answer was affirmative, which means that there's going to be quite a few weddings in the Jerusalem banquet hall purchased by philanthropist Yosef Gutnick to ensure that all the students in his center could get married in style.

IT'S STILL several months premature, but the Israel-Egypt Friendship Association is today holding a luncheon to mark the 19th anniversary of the visit to Israel by President Anwar Sadat, whose name is unfortunately misspelled in the invitation. Guests of honor are of course Egyptian ambassador Mohammed Bassiouny and his wife, Nagwa.

CELEBRITY STATUS for most of her adult life has not obliterated Sophia Loren's memories of her poverty-stricken childhood in Naples. In fact, it is the poverty which is her leitmotif, she admits in a soon-to-be-published autobiography. Its lingering shadow has driven her to buy luxury cars, luxury homes and luxury clothes.

ONE OF Loren's equally famous admirers is Sylvester Stallone, who named his infant daughter after her. A devoted father who pays close attention to the baby's every burp, smile and cry, checks her weight regularly and keeps her fashionably dressed, Stallone draws the line on calls of nature. He leaves it to her mother to change her diapers.

State TV under siege

**THE WEEK THAT WAS
MICHAEL YUDELMAN**

JUST after the elections, Communications Minister Limor Livnat made some veiled threats against the Israel Broadcasting Authority but was hastily hushed up by the prime minister.

Everyone knew it was only a matter of time before the sword fell.

This time it was the turn of Avigdor Lieberman to wield it. He is director-general of the Prime Minister's Office but is also known as managing director of the state.

First he got the cabinet to slash the IBA's budget mercilessly. Then he prevented its approval entirely, cutting the IBA off from its income.



Lieberman: The press here is like 'Pravda.'

Lieberman has made no secret of his desire to see the back of IBA director-general Mordechai Kirschenbaum. He said as much in an interview with *Ma'ariv's* Shalom Yerushalmi last weekend. Lieberman also said that he does not watch the political satires on television — hard luck *Hartzoim* and *The Cameri Quintet* — yet he felt free to express the opinion they are "inferior." And he does not read newspapers because "the press here is like *Pravda*."

According to this media expert who ignores the media, relations between Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and the security chiefs are "quite proper and as they should be." In his uninformed opinion, Israel's status in the world is "excellent."

On the subject of national unity government, Lieberman believes the coalition is "a winning team which should not be changed."

Before the cabinet debate on the IBA budget, Lieberman provided the ministers with briefs and summaries from the Comptroller's reports citing mismanagement and disorder.

Kirschenbaum said this week that the summaries Lieberman produced were doctored, inaccurate and taken out of previous reports on IBA management before Kirschenbaum came into office.

After MKs complained that ministers were being misled, the Knesset Control Committee convened to debate the issue. The State Comptroller is also considering looking into the affair.

"This is forgery, and we'll prove it at the police station or anywhere we're asked to," said a furious Kirschenbaum. "This is not some innocent report on the IBA — it was intended to blacken us and to penalize the authority by cutting off its funds. They've been running a campaign of incitement."

Lieberman countered that all the fuss was a crusade against himself and that the IBA management was a resounding failure which could-

n't run a kiosk. He said people cannot understand why they have to pay television fees.

A day later, as the Knesset Finance Committee was about to vote on the IBA budget, its chairman, MK Avraham Ravitz, was told by Lieberman to halt the discussion and "freeze" the budget. Kirschenbaum, who had understood the budget debate was to continue, was not allowed to enter the meeting and was told he was not invited.

The move left the IBA dangling with no budget for 1997 and unable to collect fees. A month's delay in charging the fees will cost it NIS 50 million.

Lieberman's high-handed interference infuriated MKs from both right and left. Likud MK Meir Sheerit said "it is scandalous to treat the IBA in this way."

Labor accused Lieberman of attempting to distort professional news coverage while hiding the government's gross shortcomings. "A vicious director-general is acting in a vulgar fashion — humiliating officials, threatening MKs and running the state in a most scandalous way," fumed Labor MK Dalit Itzik.

TUNNEL OF LOVE

As if the IBA hadn't enough problems, haredi MKs launched an attack on the "anti-religious" tone of *The Cameri Quintet* skits and Gil Kopach's weekly Torah portion.

What seemed to enrage the MKs most was Sunday's controversial *Cameri Quintet* show on the Hasmonean Tunnel, in which Keren Mor seductively pleaded "Bibi, open the tunnel."

Religious MKs in the Finance Committee said they resented having their taxes fund programs they found offensive. The Shas representative in the IBA plenum, Gabi Bouhoul, petitioned the High Court of Justice for an injunction to silence *The Cameri Quintet*, or at least force the IBA to moderate the scripts.

Justice Theodor Orr, who watched the show, refused the injunction. He said "this is a satirical program combining satire and, at times, expressions which some viewers might think cross the boundaries of good taste."

However, he said, this did not justify such a drastic step as restricting freedom of expression by forbidding broadcasts before the IBA plenum debated the issue.

OUT WHERE?

The truth might be out there, but no one could hazard even a vague guess why extra-terrestrials or any intelligent galactic life form should land in Israel, of all places, and why this week, yet. It was hardly a case Mulder and Scully would consider opening a file on. But this did not stop hundreds of UFO geeks, Star Trekkies and Babylon Five fans from gathering and waiting out all night for the great starship armada to arrive.

With new taxes descending on us, despite all of Netanyahu's "read my lips" promises, and the Hebron agreement is (for the millionth time) "about to be signed any minute," it may be no wonder thousands of Israelis should seek solace and escape in outer space.

The question remains why any intelligent life form short of galactic masochists should want to land in the middle of it.

POLLS

(Continued from Page 9)

question. The Beilin-Abu Mazen plan as a whole wins an Israeli majority of 54% with 16% "don't know." Margin of error in Ezerhi and JMCC polls is 3% and in Gutman poll 4%. The support among Palestinians for the Beilin-Abu Mazen plan is considerably less than among Israelis, and PA officials say it is only something to which Abu Mazen, Arafat's deputy, agreed to listen. The situation is fluid and the Gutman survey, which asks "what if" questions, shows that answers depend on circumstances, even hypothetical ones. Unfortunately, the circumstances today are less clearly favorable than they used to be. There is far less mutual trust. Palestinians interpret the change of government in Israel as a slap in the face.

But here we find another anomaly. Most people would not need a poll to show them that faith in the peace process has decreased in recent months both among Israelis and Palestinians. A poll by the Nablus-based Palestinian Center for Research and Studies (PCRS) disputes that. It asks, "Do you support or oppose the peace process?" and 79.3% answer in the affirmative. In Gaza, it is 87% and in the West Bank 75%. This poll, its 25th since the Oslo accords, conducted from December 26 to 28, compares to 70% support at the end of September when its 24th poll was taken just before and during the

clashes over the Western Wall Tunnel. But together with the increase in support comes an increase in support for "attacks against Israeli targets," up from 22% in March to 39.5% today. PCRS chief pollster Khalil Shikaki, a brother of Fathi, the slain Islamic Jihad leader, says it is not a fluke and "follows a trend among students towards more support for violence" since the Israeli elections. It expresses confidence that violence works, as it did in September.

Do Palestinians essentially hate Israel? The PCRS poll asks an interesting question. After indicating that Palestinians mostly want democracy, it asks how they rate democracy and human rights in the US, France and Israel. Astonishingly, Israel wins with 53%, the only country which a majority rates as "very good." It receives a "good-very good" rating from 78%. The US, the arbiter of the peace process, scores 68% and France, the PA's biggest supporter in Europe, scores 60%. Jordan and Egypt each score 34%. The PA scores 44.2%, but only 9% rate it "very good."

That Palestinians consider Israel, hitherto their nemesis and military occupier, to be perhaps the world's most democratic country (presumably only within the Green Line) is food for thought when it comes to possible relations, once Palestinians achieve what they consider to be their right of self-determination.

BRULIK



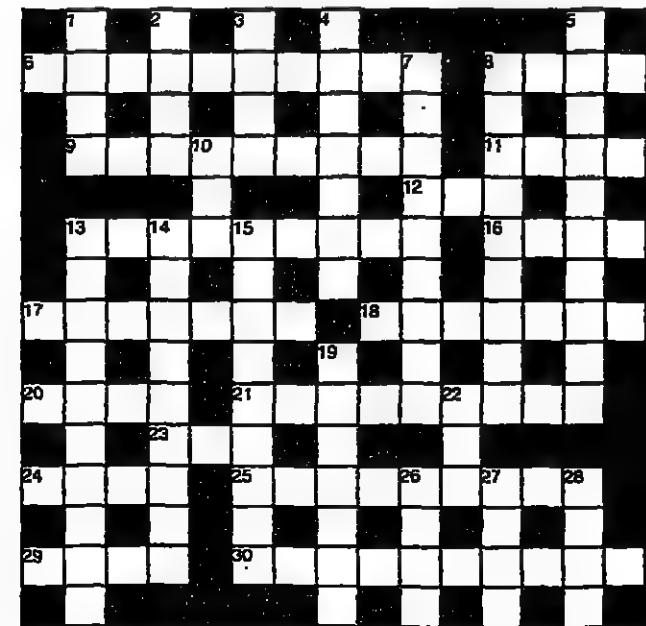
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ACROSS

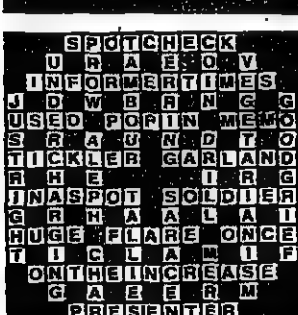
- 6 Sliced loaf ordered for dining areas (10)
- 8 News of an anaesthetic (4)
- 9 Matting wicket for cricket at home? (9)
- 11 Place is a mess, we hear (4)
- 12 A church seen on short section of Circle Line (3)
- 13 Breed of sheep from Dudley (9)
- 16 A place of retreat in port (4)
- 17 Stuff with pieces of chicken—gorgeous! (7)
- 18 Progress in main road (7)
- 20 Outlook of woman after life in France? (7)
- 21 Type ruled out, seemingly (9)
- 23 One swoops low, nose to tail (3)

DOWN

- 1 Joke book? (4)
- 2 Copperfield begging (4)
- 3 Duke, say, holding western dollars (4)
- 4 Clearness of water run in LA, city of variety (7)
- 5 Chemist once knotted a yacht-rope (10)
- 7 But don't expect it to have a cube root! (5-4)



SOLUTIONS



Yesterday's Quick Solution
ACROSS: 1 Folly, 4 Green, 10 Defuse, 11 Asaan, 12 Latha, 13 Tempest, 15 Need, 17 Junta, 19 Gated, 22 Bued, 25 Wilhelm, 27 Maori, 29 Dewet, 30 Earthly, 31 Idem, 33 Clerk.
DOWN: 2 Unfit, 3 Laniest, 5 Realm, 6 Anzures, 7 Oddly, 8 State, 9 Amity, 14 Edge, 16 Earl, 18 Unlured, 20 Admiral, 21 Swede, 23 Ueber, 24 Sibyl, 26 Extra, 28 Other.

QUICK CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- 1 Spun (7)
- 5 Fragment (5)
- 8 Meat from pig (5)
- 9 Foretell (7)
- 10 Athletes (7)
- 11 On the move (5)
- 12 Fairy king (6)
- 14 Writing instrument (6)
- 17 Brief and concise (5)
- 19 Painful labour (7)
- 22 Insult openly (7)
- 23 Scottish island (5)
- 24 Lock of hair (5)
- 25 Speak haltingly (7)

DOWN

- 1 German composer (5)
- 2 Enrage greatly (7)
- 3 Forward thrust (5)
- 4 Remove from office (6)
- 5 Introduction to book (7)
- 6 Expel tenant (5)
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- 21 Stratum, film (5)

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DAVID BAR-ILLAN

Prime Minister's Senior Policy Adviser

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Foreign Editor, The Jerusalem Post

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BUSINESS & FINANCE

Friday, January 10, 1997

13

Eisenberg replaces Arens as Zim chairman

GALIT LIPKIS BECK

ISRAEL Corp. chairman Shaul Eisenberg was appointed chairman of the board of directors of subsidiary Zim Israel Navigation Company at a board meeting yesterday, replacing Moshe Arens, who had been appointed to the position only four months ago.

Dr. Yoram Sebban, Zim's head of planning and engineering, was appointed acting director-general, instead of Matty Morgenstern, who resigned at the request of the company's major shareholder.

Zim is one of the 10 largest container-shipping companies in the world. The company is controlled by the government and Israel Corp., which each have a 48.6 percent holding. The remaining shares are held by private investors.

The changes in Zim's management team are part of a decision by Shaul Eisenberg and his son Erwin to take immediate measures following the company's losses of more than \$2.1 million in the first nine months of 1996.

An Israel Corp. spokesman refused to comment on the situation. However, sources close to the company said Eisenberg has decided to expand his involvement in Zim's management in an attempt to return the company to the black.

Industry insiders expect Eisenberg to implement major structural and managerial changes in the company.

Ronnie Gat, chairman of the Jafra-Tabori soft-drink company and a former employee of the Eisenberg group, was appointed a member of the board of directors of Zim, instead of Arens.

Gat, in partnership with former finance ministry official Ronen Wolfman, will lead an executive committee that will work together with the new acting general manager.

Speaking on Israel Radio, Arens said he was not forced to resign, but rather decided to step down, since Eisenberg intends to be involved in the management of the company on a daily basis. "There is no reason for me to remain here," he said.

In reaction to reports that the Israel Corp. was dissatisfied with Morgenstern's management, Arens said the company was managed appropriately.

Industrialists: Public-sector reforms insufficient

DAVID HARRIS

THE Manufacturers Association yesterday said the Treasury's newly approved blueprint for structural reforms in the public sector were a step "in the right direction," but also "insufficient."

Other reforms should be considered by the cabinet, including the break-up of monopolies and cartels in the insurance sector, maritime and air-shipment industries, inner-city services, and the water and energy utilities, according to the chairman of the association's economics committee, Yair Rotlevy.

"I know it's very difficult to do everything in one go," said Rotlevy. "But if you're already starting, then there is plenty of room for scrapping monopolies and cartels in other sectors."

The government is avoiding tackling Israel Electric Corporation and the Mekorot water company at this stage, because they are too big a challenge, said Rotlevy. "The government

has decided it will deal with the easier issues at this stage, not that any of them are that easy."

The cabinet is expected to conclude its deliberations on the handful of outstanding proposals during this morning's weekly meeting. These include planned developments and reforms in the construction sector, such as the transfer of 110,000 publicly owned apartments to the private sector, and the task of constructing 400,000 new homes before the end of 1999.

Objections to the planned changes, particularly with regard to housing, have been raised by the non-profit Community Advocacy organization. In a widely distributed letter, the organization suggests that subcontracting public apartment management will have a detrimental effect on the socially weak.

Meanwhile, with the long-awaited announce-

ment of the companies to be privatized this year expected before the end of the month, only one of the government's major economic reform packages will remain in limbo - the recommendations of the Strodet committee on the capital markets.

The committee published its findings last September, only to be met by a wave of opposition to plans to tax interest on short- and medium-term savings. A subsequent second committee, comprising representatives of the Treasury, Bank of Israel and Prime Minister's Office, failed to reach agreement on the issue. Consequently, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said he would solve the outstanding problems with Finance Minister Dan Meridor immediately after the passage of the 1997 budget. However, Netanyahu this week talked around the issue, rather than publicly setting a date for the discussion.



A trader at the Russian Commodities Exchange yesterday flashes his trading card, with the code name "Father" in Cyrillic to execute a transaction. Russian equity markets stopped their trading on Thursday on the first day of trading since President Boris Yeltsin was hospitalized with pneumonia only two months after undergoing heart surgery. (Reuters)

Shekel at bottom of central bank's diagonal band

DAVID HARRIS and Jerusalem Post Staff

THE shekel's exchange rate yesterday hit the lowest end of the Bank of Israel's self-imposed band, which allows the currency to trade freely in a range of up to 7 percent above or under the "diagonal point" of its diagonal of expected inflation in the major industrialized economies.

This means that the shekel is at the point where the central bank would consider it excessively strong, and consequently intervene in trading - by selling shekels for foreign currency - in order to weaken it.

The dollar traded yesterday at NIS 3.248, while the Bank of Israel's basket of leading currencies settled at NIS 3.6139.

Meanwhile, Bank of Israel research director Leo Leiderman yesterday said that in real terms the government's recent budget cut was less than half its nominal NIS 7.2 billion magnitude.

Initial central bank data suggests that more than 50% of the total will be raised through taxation and other revenue-generating measures.

Speaking to business leaders in Tel Aviv,

Leiderman said this is a worrying trend. "It is to be expected that increasing the tax burden will affect the desire of the individual to work, save and invest," he said. "The tax burden is already very high."

Finance Ministry spokesman Eli Yosef refused to react to the speech, but one Treasury source said the reason for Leiderman's comments is clear: "the bank has its own agenda, and that's its interest rates."

Leiderman, however, did say the government is moving in the right direction to put the economy back on track. "In the wake of the cuts decision, together with decisions on privatization and structural reforms, there is an opportunity in 1997 to restore confidence in fiscal policy."

Given the higher than predicted (approximately 10.5% compared to the target 8% to 10%) inflation rate last year, and the need to achieve a 7% to 10% target in 1997, Leiderman warned that the bank will continue to operate a cautious monetary policy. This will also help attain the government's longer term, multi-year inflation target of between 2.5% and 4.5% by 2001.

Analog Devices to open Herzliya R&D center

JENNIFER FRIEDLIN

ANALOG Devices, Inc., a Massachusetts-based developer of integrated circuits, will open a research and development center in Herzliya next week, local representatives of the company said yesterday.

Analog Devices employs about 6,900 people worldwide, and its sales last year totaled \$1.19 billion. In addition to Israel and Massachusetts, the company has manufacturing facilities in California, North Carolina, Ireland, the Philippines and Taiwan.

During the first year of operation in Israel, the company will invest \$3 million to \$4m. In the center, which will employ 20 engineers, the representatives said.

The engineers will be responsible for developing the company's next generation of digital signal processing devices. These products are used in chips designed for multimedia, radar, medical scanner and cellular phone applications.

Analog Devices, whose shares are traded on the New York Stock Exchange, is a leading manufacturer of precision, high-performance integrated circuits used in analog and digital signal processing applications.

Most recently, the company announced the development of a semiconductor for building cellular phones that reduces product development time, lowers system costs and provides higher performance.

Winning bids in Haifa, Ashdod port expansions to be unveiled 'soon'

DAVID HARRIS

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New York market indexes

| | Last | Change |
|----------------|---------|--------|
| DJ Industrial | 8926.00 | +75.58 |
| DJ Transport | 2270.47 | +13.57 |
| DJ Utility | 2526.86 | +2.03 |
| DJ Comp | 2642.86 | +1.39 |
| NYSE Composite | 2642.86 | +1.39 |
| NYSE Transport | 2270.47 | +13.57 |
| NYSE Utility | 2526.86 | +2.03 |
| NYSE Comp | 2642.86 | +1.39 |
| S&P 500 | 2642.86 | +1.39 |
| S&P 400 | 2642.86 | +1.39 |
| AMEX | 2642.86 | +1.39 |

NYSE stocks

| Share | Unchanged | Advance | Decline |
|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------|
| Volume | 780 | 1000 | 940 |
| Volume (in 1000s) | 780 | 1000 | 940 |
| Volume (in 1000s) | 780 | 1000 | 940 |

Other stock market indexes

| | Last | Change |
|---------------------------|---------|--------|
| FTSE 100 | 4087.7 | -0.8 |
| London Stock Index | 4087.7 | -0.8 |
| Hong Kong Hang Seng Index | 12186.1 | -95.6 |
| Nikkei 225 | 2224.0 | +3.3 |

Israeli stocks in US

| | Last | Change |
|-----|------|--------|
| AMC | 41.5 | +0.5 |
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VEHICLES

Burg refuses to meet top Swiss official

JEWISH AGENCY Chairman Abraham Burg refused yesterday to meet with a senior Swiss foreign ministry official, who wanted to discuss the issue of Jewish Holocaust-era assets in Swiss banks.

On Wednesday, Burg said negotiations with the Swiss over funds belonging to Holocaust victims could not continue until former Swiss president Jean-Pascal Delamuraz retracted his remark that Jewish demands for a compensation fund were "blackmail."

In a letter to Swiss ambassador and task force head Thomas G. Borer, Burg said that "under the present conditions, I am not interested or able to meet with you."

Burg said Delamuraz's statement has created a reality that pre-

Jerusalem Post Staff and news agencies

vents his colleagues in the negotiations with the Swiss banks from meeting official representatives of the Swiss government until such time as the appalling statement made by the former president is retracted.

Delamuraz's remark, made just before he stepped down last week from the one-year rotating presidency to become economics minister, triggered an official protest from Israel and threats from the Jewish Agency and World Jewish Congress to support boycotts and class-action lawsuits against Swiss banks.

Jewish leaders had suggested Switzerland set up a \$250 million

compensation fund to help elderly survivors pending the outcome of investigations into missing bank accounts of Holocaust victims.

The Swiss cabinet said Tuesday it was willing to set up a compensation fund using some unclaimed bank funds – but not government money. It also agreed to investigate allegations that Switzerland laundered billions of dollars worth of looted Nazi gold and used Jewish assets to compensate Swiss firms for wartime and postwar losses.

Swiss leaders, meeting in a telephone conference Tuesday, noted that Delamuraz had said his remarks were taken the wrong way, and had expressed regret for that. But the government did not apologize for or criticize Delamuraz, who did not retract his statement.

Ya'akov Or replaces Shahor as territories coordinator

DEFENSE Minister Yitzhak Mordechai has appointed Brig.-Gen. Ya'akov Or as the new coordinator of government activities in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip, replacing Maj.-Gen. Oren Shahor who resigned last week.

At 50, Or is relatively older than many brigadiers and his promotion to major-general as he assumes the new post is very rare at his age. But he brings with him intimate knowledge of the territories, since he served as military commander of the Gaza District, and twice as commander of Judea and Samaria. A combat veteran of the 1967 and 1973 wars, Or has spent the past four years as head of the General Staff's doctrine and training branch.

ARIEH O'SULLIVAN

He is to take over from Shahor in mid-February. Shahor turned down a request by Mordechai to remain in the position. Those close to Shahor said he also rejected Mordechai's offers for other posts in the IDF and decided to leave the army altogether after 32 years of service, including two years in his present role.

Last November, Mordechai suspended Shahor as top negotiator for civilian affairs with the Palestinians after he admitted to holding periodic meetings with opposition leader Shimon Peres. Shahor has maintained they were on a friendly basis and denied he passed on secret information.

"He had hoped that the Hebron agreement would end quickly since he helped put it together. It was his baby. Still he decided to quit since he felt he finished the job," said one defense source close to Shahor.

A former chief intelligence Corps officer, Shahor was appointed by Yitzhak Rabin and was known to be close to Shimon Sheves, then director-general of Rabin's office. Or, on the other hand, has known Mordechai for years and their paths crossed often in the army.

Or has a BA in Oriental studies and geography from Tel Aviv University and an MA in political science from Haifa University.



A baker in Jerusalem's Old City prepares sweets yesterday for the first day of Ramadan today.

(Brian Handler)

100,000 Moslems expected on Temple Mount for prayers today

SOME 100,000 Moslems are expected to attend Friday prayers on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem today, the first day of Ramadan.

About 3,000 police and border policemen will secure the Old City and eastern Jerusalem and man checkpoints into the city beginning early this morning. Mounted policemen and foot patrols will also be in force today. A police helicopter will help manage traffic.

There will also be stringent security checks at

the entrance to the Temple Mount, and worshippers will be required to deposit their identity cards upon entry.

In past years, police have not prevented entry to the mount for worshippers who don't have permits for entry into Israel, because they wanted to avoid confrontations that could trigger riots. This policy is also expected to be implemented today.

Police said yesterday that forces would remain on high alert throughout Ramadan. Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai issued

a Ramadan blessing yesterday to Moslems. "Together, we will hope that Ramadan and the days that follow it will be marked by peace, understanding, security and prosperity," Mordechai said.

The Jerusalem Municipality has reached an agreement with the Waqf whereby the Old City will be lit up at night and the entrance gates will be decorated. Extra clean-up crews will also be on duty.

Moslem municipal workers will also be allowed to stop work two hours earlier. (Him)

Arab communities close schools in show of support for councils

SCHOOLS and kindergartens in Arab towns and villages throughout the country were closed yesterday, leaving 300,000 children at home.

Municipal services in the 54 Arab local authorities were also shut down as part of a campaign to press the government to bail out the debt-ridden councils.

Arab council heads have been staging a sit-in at a protest tent opposite the Prime

Minister's Office in Jerusalem for a month.

The 24-hour strike of educational and municipal services yesterday followed a protest march and mass demonstration in Jerusalem last week by the council leaders and hundreds of municipal employees.

So far the protest action has failed to even bring about talks between the gov-

DAVID RUDGE

ernment and the council heads over the financial straits of the Arab councils.

The local authorities have altogether accumulated debts totaling over NIS 420 million. The council heads are demanding consolidation of the deficits, as well as significant increase in regular and development budgets to bring them up to the

level of allocations given to Jewish councils.

"We are very disappointed, frustrated and upset that the government doesn't see fit to deal with problems that are affecting around one million [Arab] citizens," said Hussein Suleiman, spokesman for the forum of Arab Council Heads.

"There's virtually no contact whatsoever between ourselves and members of the

government, despite the fact that all the ministers are well aware of the problems," he said.

Suleiman said there would be a meeting of the Arab Council Heads forum tomorrow to decide on further action. "I don't want to say now what matters will be on the agenda, but I believe that some decisive decisions will be taken to intensify the campaign," he added.

Palestinian Airlines to begin operations today from Cairo

CAIRO (AP) — Palestinian Airlines will launch its maiden voyages today, taking two plane-loads of Moslem pilgrims to the Saudi Arabian city of Jiddah, the airline announced yesterday.

Airline officials had hoped the first flights would be from the autonomous Palestinian territory of Gaza. But Fayed Zaidan, head of the Palestinian civil aviation authority, said earlier this week that Israel was withholding approval over "security issues."

Airline officials said flights would depart from Port Said starting this morning. They said passengers already have been bused to Egypt from the Gaza Strip.

The airline has two Dutch-made Fokker-50 planes, each with a capacity of 50 people. Both will make four trips through Monday to transport more than 330 pilgrims, it said.

The flights were to have begun earlier in the week, but were delayed by paperwork.

"Despite the three-day delay, the passengers insisted on these planes because the Palestinian flag is on them," said Capt. Jamal al-Haw, one of the pilots. "We have no single cancellation. As a matter of fact, we have overbookings."

The Palestinian group's pilgrimage will last for 10 days. Nahi Manna, regional manager for the Palestinian Airlines in Cairo, said he did not expect the Israelis and Palestinians to work out details of flights from Gaza until talks on Hebron are concluded.

"The agreement with Israel concerning flying from the Palestinian airport in Gaza is pending until both sides reach an agreement on Hebron," he said.

He said that in the past, many Palestinians had to go by road through Egypt and take a ferry to Saudi Arabia.

"There is no comparison between this two-hour flight and the long and tiring road journey that the Palestinians from Gaza and the West Bank used to take," he said.

Two killed on roads yesterday

TWO people were killed and 124 were injured in 118 road accidents around the country yesterday. Since the beginning of the week, 12 people have been killed on the roads.

A driver was killed and two people suffered moderate to serious injuries yesterday when the driver's car was hit head on by another vehicle which veered into his lane while passing illegally near Vered Hagaili. The passing driver, who suffered moderate injuries, was under police guard at Safed's Rebecca Sieff Hospital.

A Palestinian girl was killed when she was hit by an Israeli car on the Trans-Samaria Highway. Also on the highway, two Israeli cars collided, injuring two people moderately.

A 21-year-old motorcyclist was moderately to seriously injured yesterday evening in Lod when he was hit by a car. Police are investigating the cause of the accident. (Him)

Boycott puts damper on enthusiasm at first Israeli trade fair in Amman

AMMAN (AP) — Arab businessmen boycotted Israel's first trade fair in Jordan, and Israelis said yesterday staunch opposition to the exhibition was likely to chill business relations between the countries.

Inside the blue hangar housing the show, representatives of Israeli firms drank coffee and chatted with each other as Jordanian plainclothes policemen walked through the area.

More than 4,000 demonstrators protested the opening of the four-day fair Wednesday, and police fired water cannons to block angry crowds from reaching the site.

"Israeli firms will be afraid to come and do business in Jordan in view of the opposition here," said Shalom Gabbay, owner of the Tel Aviv-based Amik Tourism Co., standing behind a counter waiting for Jordanian visitors.

VALLEY

(Continued from Page 2)

Jordan Valley Settlements Committee spokeswoman Tami Atiya said that neither of the options calls for Israeli sovereignty over the area and as such are "totally unacceptable" to the Jordan Valley settlers.

The three settlement leaders in the Jordan Valley, David Elhayani, David Levy and David Koplovitz, sent a letter to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu calling on him to suspend discussions between Likud and Labor representatives on the common position paper.

"In a meeting that took place on

Wednesday, MK Eitan made it clear that in the discussions he is having with Beilin, it has been established that Israeli sovereignty will not be extended over the Jordan Valley and Ma'aleh Efrain," the letter read. "This position is very grave, and shows that Eitan has acted faithfully toward the trust you, and we, placed in him."

Eitan said yesterday that all his "activities are meant to defend the settlements and their residents, and I want to reach a situation where there will be national agreement, which is the true guarantee to strengthening the settlements."

YESHIVA

not call for a permit signed by Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai. Construction of the building does, however, necessitate the minister's permission, something that has not yet been forthcoming.

Settlers, meanwhile, moved a mobile home to a hill just outside of Itamar, near Nablus. Three other mobile homes were moved there in recent weeks, with the Jews there trying to stake claim to strategic hills around the settlement. The settlers said they had permission to bring up the mobile home, something that is denied by the IDF.

SOLDIER

ago, his mother called on a Friday and said they were recalling him on Saturday night. I said goodbye to him. I told him that for this [going to Lebanon] you're getting four kisses. Take care. Then I had to force him to leave. It was a quarter to four and Shabbat begins at 4:09. I said to Ori, 'Go home, go back to your mother.' And Ori, with his smile, says, 'Goodbye, be strong.' He was chosen outstanding soldier in his last course. I told him: 'Yishai was enough.'

And in Beir El, nearly 3,000 schoolchildren from the Binyamin Regional Council marched from the entrance to the settlement to the site of last month's murder of Eia and Efrain Tzur. The march came on the thirtieth day after the attack and was meant, said Yoav Barak, head of the settlement's secretariat, to signal that "we are not leaving" and that "we are not afraid to go back to the place where they were killed."

The children then held a tree-planting ceremony near the settlement's cemetery, just under Har Artis, where settlers tried unsuccessfully last week to start a new neighborhood named after the Tzurs.

Be careful," He smiled with his eyes all lit up, a dimpled smile from ear to ear.

We mentioned that they be buried together as a suggestion and a request, and Ori's mother and father, Levana and Amram, said, "It's clear that Ori will be buried alongside Yishai. They were friends and Ori came to see you each Friday. I thank them very much for that. We promised we would look after Ori, because we have lost another son. They said, 'We know, and now we are brothers and sisters.'



Avi Shai Braverman, center, president of Ben-Gurion University, joins Ilanit Sasson Melchior, newly elected chairwoman of the World Union of Jewish Students, and her predecessor, Claude Kandiyoti, during the 24th WUJS Congress in which 250 students from around the world participated.

(Joe Malcolm)

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Alba beats Maccabi in close contest

ARYEH DEAN COHEN

THAT nauseous feeling Maccabi Tel Aviv fans were feeling after last night's 70-65 loss to Alba Berlin wasn't in sympathy for Buck Johnson, who missed the game with the flu.

Rather, it was a sickening feeling that came from knowing that even without Johnson and the injured Brad Leaf, Maccabi could have and should have beaten the Germans in the first game of the second round of Euroleague play.

Only Doron Sheffer and Randy White were anywhere near their usual selves vs. the Germans, as coach Zvi Sherf's undermanned squad trimmed away a chance to surprise Alba, and were done in by poor shot selection and some general malaise on defense.

To their credit, Maccabi hung in the game when the going got tough. That was especially after the Alba opening blitzkrieg that took them to a quick 14-2 lead in the first few minutes of play. Led by Henrik Rodl, the Germans rolled past Maccabi, driving to the hoop with abandon and scoring at will until Sherf mercifully called time out.

But Sheffer & Co. refused to roll over and

play dead for the Germans, with Sheffer keying a comeback that saw Maccabi close the gap to 4, at 20-16. It could have been even closer had White—who showed some fine offensive moves in the first half—managed to score a few more of his inside opportunities.

Still, with help from Borko Radovic—who started in place of the ill Johnson, who did not make the trip to Berlin in the end—Maccabi got within 28-26 when Nadav Henefeld stole the ball, and Sheffer beautifully found a streaking Radovic for a hoop.

However, that was as close as they got. Sure they had chances to tie it before half-time, but Maccabi frustratingly failed to take advantage, as Henefeld missed a forced jumper and Derrick Sharp was way off from three-point range. Bad foul shooting didn't help matters, either. When Jorg Lietke hit a three, Alba had a 43-38 halftime advantage. The game could have just as easily been tied had Maccabi been more patient with the ball.

The Germans came out smoking in the

second half, racing to a 50-40 lead, aided by Maccabi turnovers. But Oded Katash suddenly found the basket for a three-pointer to key a 9-1 Maccabi surge that again brought Sherf's club back to within two, 51-49.

However, Alba's Rodl and Henrik Harnisch suddenly hit successive three-pointers after the club had been ice cold from outside, and Rodl scored on a stuff when Maccabi failed to get back on defense to boost the lead back to 10 again with 13:30 left.

Constantin Pops, who had been a force inside off the bench, fouled out, while White shut down by the Germans, and Maccabi never figured out a way to get German point guard Sasha Obradovic—who had three fouls at halftime—in foul trouble.

But as bad as things were, Maccabi stuck around to the end of the game. Katash fired in another three-pointer with 1:30 left and suddenly it was 66-63, then stole the ball and seemed poised to bring his team within one point. Up he went for one of his patented fast-break lay-ups, but he missed it

badly, bothered by the German defense. Harnisch was fouled on the ensuing play and made both to essentially put the game out of reach. With the Germans ahead 70-65, Katash and Sharp fired up desperation shots, but were way off the mark as Alba drew first blood in the Group E competition.

For Maccabi, Johnson's absence was sorely felt on offense, while Leaf's presence was also missed, especially since neither Katash nor Sharp contributed much from the backcourt. The only bright spot for Maccabi was the outstanding play of Sheffer, who had 17 points. White had 20, but wasn't a force in the second half, while Henefeld seemed like he too had remained back in Tel Aviv, scoring just four on the night. Former Maccabi Tel Aviv player Wendell Alexis had 17 for Alba, while Rodl had 14.

Maccabi needs to quickly find an Rx for its sputtering offense before next week's home game vs. Charleroi, or face the prospect of being in deep trouble in the quest for a spot in the Final Four. Hopefully, a fit Leaf and Johnson will get Sherf's club back on track quickly.

Australian Open relies on rankings for seeds

MELBOURNE (Reuters)

Australian Open officials yesterday stuck almost rigidly to world rankings in naming their seedings, avoiding a repeat of the controversy that engulfed last year's US Open.

American Pete Sampras and Germany's Steffi Graf were named No. 1 seeds in the men's and women's singles respectively for the year's first Grand Slam, starting at Melbourne Park on Monday.

Unlike at the US Open and Wimbledon, where officials also consider a player's record on grass, the Australian Open has a tradition of relying on ATP Tour and WTA Tour rankings in deciding seedings.

Defending champion Boris Becker was seeded sixth, true to his ranking, behind Thomas Muster, who has never won the tournament and has not reached the last eight since 1994.

Spain's Arantxa Sanchez Vicario was named women's second seed following the withdrawal of American Monica Seles because of a broken finger.

Muster, the world No. 5, accused US Open officials of manipulating the draw and seedings when they departed from the

usual by-the-rankings format last year.

The strong reaction from Muster and other players prompted officials to take the unprecedented step of scrapping the original men's draw and starting again from scratch.

Seedings

Men:
1. Pete Sampras, United States
2. Michael Chang, United States
3. Goran Ivanisevic, Croatia
4. Yevgeny Kafelnikov, Russia
5. Thomas Muster, Austria
6. Boris Becker, Germany
7. Andre Agassi, United States
8. Wayne Ferreira, South Africa
9. Marcelo Rios, Chile
10. Alberto Costa, Spain
11. Jim Courier, United States
12. Magnus Gustafsson, Sweden
13. Jan Siemieniuk, Netherlands
14. Felix Mantilla, Spain
15. Michael Stich, Germany
16. Alberto Berasategui, Spain

Women:
1. Steffi Graf, Germany
2. Arantxa Sanchez Vicario, Spain
3. Conchita Martinez, Spain
4. Martina Hingis, Switzerland
5. Andre Hubsch, Germany
6. Ivana Ljubicic, Croatia
7. Lindsay Davenport, United States
8. Ina Sprengle, Romania
9. Karina Haboudova, Slovakia
10. Brenda Schultz-McCarthy, Holland
11. Judith Wiesner, Austria
12. Amanda Coetzer, South Africa
13. Elena Likhovitskaya, Russia
14. Mary Joe Fernandez, United States
15. Chanda Rubin, United States
16. Sabine Appelmans, Belgium

Bullets end 17-game losing streak vs. Suns

LANDOVER, Maryland (AP) — Calbert Cheaney scored the go-ahead basket with 4.6 seconds left in overtime as the Washington Bullets ended a 17-game losing streak against the Phoenix Suns with a 115-113 victory Wednesday night.

Juwan Howard finished with 24 points and Rod Strickland had 22 as the Bullets notched their first win against the Suns since March 9, 1988.

Kevin Johnson matched his season high with 34 points, including a 3-pointer with 4.4 seconds left in regulation that sent Phoenix into overtime for a second straight night.

Danny Manning scored 20 and Wesley Person 18 for the Suns, who have lost five straight—all on the road.

Lakers 101, Hornets 97
Shaquille O'Neal, struggling off two sprained ankles, had 23 points and 16 rebounds as Los Angeles gained its 10th straight home win. Eddie Jones added 20 points and Nick Van Exel had 17 points and 10 assists for the Lakers.

Glen Rice led the Hornets with 27 points, Vladi Divac had 22 points and 12 rebounds and Anthony Mason added 20 points, 13 rebounds and eight assists for the Hornets.

Celtics 107, Spurs 83
Rick Fox scored 19 points and rookie Antoine Walker, playing out of position at center, added 17 points and 11 rebounds to lead Boston to its second straight win.

It was only the second time this season that Boston has won back-to-back games. Monty Williams and Avery Johnson scored 14 points for San Antonio, which dropped to 4-13 on the road.

Todd Day also scored 17 points for Boston, which put the game away in the third quarter by outscoring the Spurs San Antonio 32-23 to take a 83-64 lead into the final period.

Rockets 81, Cavaliers 78
Hakeem Olajuwon made a book shot with 27 seconds left for two of his 22 points and Houston won before the first sellout crowd of the season at Gund Arena.

Olajuwon missed his first chance to break a 75-75 tie with 40 seconds left, but Charles



KEEP BACK, SHAQ — Charlotte Hornets' center Vladi Divac grabs a rebound while the Los Angeles Lakers' Shaquille O'Neal moves in behind him.

Barkley grabbed the most important of his 12 rebounds. The Midwest Division-leading Rockets got the ball back to their All-Star center, who came through the second time.

The Cavaliers had two chances to tie it with a 3-pointer in the closing seconds, but made two straight turnovers.

Terrell Brandon led the Cavaliers with 26 points. Bobby Phillips had 23, and Chris Mills added seven points and tied a career high with 14 rebounds.

Mavericks 111, 76ers 93
George McClellan scored 23 points, including 16 in the second quarter, as Dallas handed the 76ers their seventh straight loss and 17th in the last 18 games.

Chris Gatling added 22 points and Sam Cassell 21 for the

Mavericks, who rebounded from a 30-point loss to the New York Knicks on Tuesday night.

Dallas played without Jimmy Jackson, the team's second-leading scorer, who was attending his grandmother's funeral in Ohio.

Allen Iverson, who was held out of the starting lineup by coach Johnny Davis for missing the pregame team meeting, had 22 points for Philadelphia.

Sonics 109, Nuggets 99
Shawn Kemp had 26 points and

WEDNESDAY'S RESULTS:
Boston 107, San Antonio 83
Dallas 111, Philadelphia 93
Houston 81, Phoenix 113 (OT)
Seattle 109, Denver 99
Milwaukee 119, Utah 112 (OT)
Miami 85, Portland 81
L.A. Lakers 101, Charlotte 97
Vancouver 109, Golden State 95

11 rebounds and Detlef Schrempf added 24 points to lead Seattle to victory.

The Sonics won for the ninth time in their last 11 games, while the Nuggets lost their fourth straight at home.

Denver hasn't defeated a win-

ning team at home this season and is 4-12 at McNichols Arena—the worst home record in the NBA.

Gary Payton, Schrempf and Sam Perkins hit key baskets in the final 2:39 after Denver pulled within two points to trail 98-96.

| EASTERN CONFERENCE | | | | | WESTERN CONFERENCE | | | | |
|--------------------|----|----|------|--------|--------------------|----|----|------|--------|
| Atlantic Division | | | | | Midwest Division | | | | |
| | W | L | Pct | GB | | W | L | Pct | GB |
| Miami | 25 | 9 | .735 | — | Houston | 26 | 8 | .768 | — |
| New York | 24 | 9 | .727 | 1/2 | Utah | 23 | 10 | .697 | 2 1/2 |
| Washington | 17 | 15 | .531 | 7 1/2 | Minnesota | 14 | 18 | .438 | 11 1/2 |
| Orlando | 12 | 17 | .414 | 10 1/2 | Dallas | 11 | 20 | .355 | 13 1/2 |
| New Jersey | 9 | 21 | .300 | 14 | San Antonio | 9 | 23 | .281 | 15 |
| Boston | 8 | 22 | .269 | 15 1/2 | Denver | 9 | 24 | .273 | 15 1/2 |
| Philadelphia | 8 | 22 | .262 | 15 1/2 | Vancouver | 7 | 27 | .208 | 18 1/2 |
| Central Division | | | | | Pacific Division | | | | |
| | W | L | Pct | GB | | W | L | Pct | GB |
| Chicago | 29 | 4 | .879 | — | L.A. Lakers | 25 | 10 | .722 | — |
| Detroit | 24 | 8 | .750 | 4 1/2 | Seattle | 25 | 11 | .694 | 1 |
| Cleveland | 21 | 12 | .636 | 8 | Portland | 19 | 15 | .559 | 6 1/2 |
| Atlanta | 19 | 11 | .633 | 8 1/2 | L.A. Clippers | 14 | 19 | .426 | 10 1/2 |
| Charlotte | 18 | 15 | .545 | 11 | Sacramento | 14 | 21 | .400 | 11 1/2 |
| Memphis | 17 | 18 | .486 | 12 | Golden State | 12 | 20 | .375 | 12 |
| Indiana | 15 | 18 | .455 | 13 | Phoenix | 10 | 24 | .294 | 15 |
| Toronto | 10 | 22 | .313 | 18 1/2 | | | | | |

NHL All-Star rosters

Rosters for the NHL All-Star Game, to be played January 18 at San Jose:

EASTERN CONFERENCE
Goalkeepers: x-John Vanbiesbroek, Florida; Martin Brodeur, New Jersey; Dominik Hasek, Buffalo.

Defensemen: x-Ray Bourque, Boston; x-Brian Leetch, New York Rangers; Paul Coffey, Philadelphia; Kevin Hatcher, Pittsburgh; Scott Stevens, New Jersey; Robert Svehla, Florida.

Forwards: x-Wayne Gretzky, New York Rangers; x-Jaromir Jagr, Pittsburgh; x-Dino Ciccarelli, Tampa Bay; Daniel Alfredsson, Ottawa; Peter Borsica, Washington; x-Dale Hawerchuk, Philadelphia; x-Dale Hunter, Washington; John LeClair, Philadelphia; Mario Lemieux, Pittsburgh; Eric Lindros, Philadelphia; Mark Messier, New York Rangers; Zigmund Palffy, New York Islanders; Mark Recchi, Montreal; Geoff Sanderson, Hartford.

Coaches: Head Coach: Doug MacLean, Florida. Assistant: Paul Maurice, Hartford.

WESTERN CONFERENCE
Goalkeepers: x-Patrick Roy, Colorado; Andy Moog, Dallas; Chris Osgood, Detroit.

Defensemen: x-Chris Chelios, Chicago; x-Sandis Ozolinsh, Colorado; Rob Blake, Los Angeles; Darian Hatcher, Dallas; Al MacInnis, St. Louis; Oleg Tverdovsky, Phoenix; x-Vladislav Fetisov, Detroit.

Forwards: x-Joe Sakic, Colorado; x-Brett Hull, St. Louis; x-Paul Kariya, Anaheim; Tony Amonte, Chicago; Jason Arnott, Edmonton; Pavel Bure, Vancouver; Theoren Fleury, Calgary; Peter Forsberg, Colorado; x-Tony Granato, San Jose; Mike Modano, Dallas; Owen Nolan, San Jose; Mats Sundin, Toronto; Steve Yzerman, Detroit.

Coaches: Head Coach: Ken Hitchcock, Dallas. Assistant: Marc Crawford, Colorado.

(x-denotes starters voted by fans; o-commissioner selections)

| EASTERN CONFERENCE | | | | | | | WESTERN CONFERENCE | | | | | | |
|--------------------|----|----|---|-----|-----|-----|--|----|----|---|-----|-----|-----|
| Atlantic Division | | | | | | | Central Division | | | | | | |
| | W | L | T | Pts | GF | GA | | W | L | T | Pts | GF | GA |
| Philadelphia | 25 | 12 | 4 | 55 | 140 | 103 | Dallas | 24 | 15 | 3 | 51 | 124 | 103 |
| Florida | 21 | 11 | 9 | 51 | 120 | 95 | Detroit | 20 | 14 | 7 | 47 | 128 | 91 |
| N.Y. Rangers | 22 | 17 | 8 | 50 | 156 | 128 | Phoenix | 18 | 19 | 4 | 40 | 110 | 130 |
| New Jersey | 21 | 15 | 4 | 46 | 105 | 102 | St. Louis | 18 | 21 | 4 | 40 | 122 | 141 |
| Washington | 17 | 20 | 4 | 38 | 109 | 110 | Chicago | 16 | 21 | 7 | 39 | 115 | 121 |
| Tampa Bay | 15 | 20 | 5 | 35 | 110 | 110 | Toronto | 17 | 25 | 0 | 34 | 128 | 150 |
| N.Y. Islanders | 12 | 20 | 8 | 32 | 102 | 118 | Pacific Division | | | | | | |
| Northeast Division | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | W | L | T | Pts | GF | GA | Colorado <td>24</td> <td>10</td> <td>8</td> <td>56</td> <td>145</td> <td>99</td> | 24 | 10 | 8 | 56 | 145 | 99 |
| Pittsburgh | 22 | 15 | 4 | 48 | 153 | 130 | Edmonton | 18 | 20 | 4 | 42 | 142 | 133 |
| Buffalo | 21 | 15 | 5 | 47 | 127 | 107 | Vancouver | 18 | 20 | 1 | 38 | 128 | 138 |
| Hartford | 17 | 18 | 7 | 41 | 122 | 131 | Anaheim | 15 | 21 | 5 | 35 | 118 | 128 |
| Montreal | 16 | 18 | 8 | 40 | 135 | 144 | Calgary | 15 | 22 | 5 | 35 | 106 | 124 |
| Quebec | 15 | 19 | 8 | 36 | 118 | 143 | San Jose | 14 | 21 | 7 | 33 | 102 | 126 |
| Ottawa | 12 | 20 | 7 | 31 | 107 | 119 | Los Angeles | 14 | 23 | 4 | 32 | 110 | 140 |

WEDNESDAY'S NHL RESULTS: Tampa Bay 4, N.Y. Rangers 3; Colorado 1, New Jersey 1; Chicago 4, Edmonton 1; Dallas 6, Detroit 3; Anaheim 3, Florida 2.

NFL Glimpse

Sunday's Conference Championships:
Carolina at Green Bay, 12:30 pm; Jacksonville at New England, 4 pm
(All times EDT, Israel time 7 hours ahead)

National League goes on break; 2nd Division to the fore

ORI LEWIS

AS the National League takes a two-week break beginning this weekend, all eyes turn to the Second Division and the center of the action is today's clash between leaders Hapoel Ashdod and Ironi Ashdod who lie in third place.

While the main action off the field appears to be of more interest to the punters at large at the moment—with National League clubs, coaches and players getting into the headlines as they reflect on their performances during the first half of the season, they are also hoping that the second half will become more competitive than the first 15 rounds of action, as the chasing pack attempts to catch up with leader Beitar Jerusalem.

The situation in the Second Division is much tighter, as only two points separate the top three clubs.

Hapoel Ashdod surprisingly took over at the top last week after

former leader, Hakoah Ramat Gan, was shocked 3-0 at home by Maccabi Jaffa, while Ashdod and Ironi Ashdod both won.

Ashdod has a remarkably large following for a Second Division club, with some 4,000 spectators regularly turning out to see them play. This match could be termed a derby, as the towns are situated so close to each other, but with only two points separating the sides, this game has all the elements of a grudge match, with the winners taking a great stride towards securing one of the two promotion spots to the National League next season.

In other news yesterday, veteran coach Zvi Rosen appeared ready to take the helm at the National League's bottom side Hapoel Tel Aviv. He has his work cut out for him, and will quickly have to turn the side's fortunes around, and hope that he can fare better than his predecessor, Wojtek Lazarek, who was fired last week.

| SECOND DIVISION | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----------------------|----|---|---|---|----|----|-------|-----|--|--|--|--|
| | P | W | D | L | GF | GA | Diff. | Pts | | | | |
| Hapoel Ashdod | 13 | 9 | 1 | 3 | 19 | 9 | 10 | 28 | | | | |
| Hakoah Ramat Gan | 13 | 8 | 2 | 3 | 25 | 13 | 13 | 26 | | | | |
| Ironi Ashdod | 13 | 7 | 5 | 1 | 23 | 13 | 10 | 26 | | | | |
| Maccabi Netanya | 13 | 6 | 4 | 3 | 23 | 17 | 6 | 22 | | | | |
| Hapoel Bat Yam | 13 | 6 | 3 | 4 | 20 | 12 | 8 | 21 | | | | |
| Maccabi Kiryat Gat | 13 | 5 | 5 | 3 | 11 | 14 | -3 | 20 | | | | |
| Maccabi Kfar Kana | 13 | 6 | 2 | 5 | 15 | 19 | -4 | 20 | | | | |
| Hapoel Ramat Gan | 13 | 4 | 5 | 4 | 14 | 11 | 3 | 17 | | | | |
| Hapoel Ashdod | 13 | 4 | 4 | 5 | 17 | 17 | 0 | 16 | | | | |
| Maccabi Acre | 13 | 4 | 4 | 5 | 13 | 16 | -3 | 16 | | | | |
| Ness Ziona | 13 | 4 | 3 | 6 | 16 | 18 | -2 | 15 | | | | |
| Beitar Tel Aviv | 13 | 3 | 4 | 6 | 13 | 19 | -6 | 13 | | | | |
| Maccabi Yavne | 13 | 4 | 1 | 8 | 13 | 22 | -9 | 13 | | | | |
| Hapoel Kiryat Shmona | 13 | 2 | 5 | 6 | 10 | 21 | -11 | 11 | | | | |
| Maccabi Jaffa | 13 | 2 | 4 | 7 | 14 | 19 | -5 | 10 | | | | |

'London Times': Bankers forced Keegan's hand

NEWCASTLE (AP) — Kevin Keegan quit as manager of Newcastle in mid-season because of pressure from bankers and the club's refusal to bid for Italian star Giuseppe Signori, according to newspaper reports yesterday.

Meanwhile, Brian Little and Johan Cruyff were ruled out as candidates to succeed Keegan at the Premier League club, while Kenny Dalglish remained the bookmakers' favorite.

The Times of London reported that Keegan, who stunned English soccer by resigning Wednesday, had his hand forced by bankers to let the club's stock market flotation go ahead smoothly.

The flotation, planned for the spring, is expected to value the club at £150 million to £200 million.

It appears Keegan wanted to leave at the end of the season. In that case, Newcastle would have had to inform prospective investors now. Financial analysts said that would have created uncertainty and possibly undermined the stock market flotation.

The Times said that Newcastle Markets, the investment bank backing the stock market sale of the club, told Newcastle bosses at a secret meeting Tuesday that Keegan must go now if he really wanted to leave.

In a new twist, the Newcastle newspaper The Journal reported that Keegan quit because club directors blocked his move to sign Signori from the Italian club Lazio. Signori was Italy's leading scorer last season with 24 goals. The paper said Keegan wanted

A-G: State won't object to retrial in Katz case

Ben-Yair says complaints by Arabs convicted in 1983 murder too substantial to reject request

THE state will not object to a retrial for the murderers of Danny Katz, Attorney-General Michael Ben-Yair told the Supreme Court yesterday.

Five Arabs were convicted of raping and murdering the 15-year-old Katz in 1983. The conviction was upheld on appeal, and the Supreme Court turned down a request for a second hearing with an expanded panel of justices. However, the case raised many questions, which ultimately led then-justice minister David Liba'i to order a probe by Deputy Attorney-General Yehudit Karp in 1992. On the basis of Karp's findings, the five asked the Supreme Court to order a retrial a few months ago.

In his response to the court, Ben-Yair acknowledged that the defendants had

many legitimate complaints. None of them was enough in itself to justify a retrial, he said, and even taken all together they were not enough for the state to feel it should request a retrial. However, their combined weight was enough that he could not in good conscience oppose the defendants' request, he said.

The first complaint was that no material from a General Security Service investigation of the five was given either to their lawyer or to the Haifa District Court. The GSS findings could have given the defendants another tool with which to challenge their confessions — which they claimed were false ones extorted by force.

The second complaint was that the five

EVELYN GORDON

had a completely incompetent defense attorney during the original trial. Ben-Yair said there was no argument on this point, but noted that they did have a competent attorney during their appeal, yet it was denied. However, he added, it is also true that the first attorney's incompetence affected the appeal. For instance, the original attorney decided that four of the five defendants should not testify. This meant that during the appeal, when the new attorney argued that the confessions were invalid, the argument was rejected on the grounds that they had not testified to this at first.

Finally, there were a number of issues that did arise during the original trial, and

were discounted by the judges, but nevertheless raise doubts — such as the lack of any physical evidence connecting the defendants to the crime. No semen or hairs were found on Katz's body; none of Katz's hair was found in the defendants' car, even though they said they had dragged him by his hair; the footprints found by Katz's body did not match those of the defendants; and there was no blood or skin under Katz's fingernails, though an unexplained scratch on one of the defendants was used by the court to support the theory that he had struggled with Katz.

In addition, each of the defendants gave several confessions whose content changed from version to version for no explicable reason, and which all contra-

dicted each other in many places. At the same time, however, some of the details matched exactly from person to person, giving rise to the suspicion that they were "fed" these details by the police.

"I am still not absolutely convinced that the defendants' claims arouse a real suspicion... of perversion of justice. It should be noted that... State Attorney [Edna Arbel] believes we should oppose the request for a retrial," Ben-Yair concluded. "However, because of the [GSS] material that was not given to the defense, because of the inappropriate legal representation and because of the question marks that have accompanied this affair, as detailed in the Karp report, I do not consider it proper to oppose a request for a retrial."



Meretz MKs Yossi Sarid (left) and Ran Cohen (top left) visit foreign workers detained at Ma'asiyahu Prison who await deportation. The MKs said the detention facility set up at the prison, where eight workers share each room, will not be able to cope with the numbers of illegal foreign workers for long.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Three children hurt in explosion

Three children, aged eight, 13 and 14, were injured, one seriously, when a makeshift bomb they had prepared exploded yesterday in Petah Tikva. They had put 15 boxes of matches into a pipe and starting beating on it when it suddenly exploded. The three were brought to Beilinson Hospital, where one underwent surgery for chest injuries. The two others suffered from shrapnel injuries. *Itim*

Rabbi Avraham Farbstein dies

Rabbi Avraham Farbstein, head of the Hebron Yeshiva in Jerusalem and a member of Degel Hatorah's Council of Torah Sages, died yesterday. He was 80. Farbstein headed the yeshiva for 50 years. The yeshiva originated in Lithuania 100 years ago.

Israelis held in Cairo brawl released

FOURTEEN Israeli tourists arrested last week after a hotel brawl were released yesterday after paying 15,000 Egyptian pounds (NIS 14,300) for the damage they caused, police said.

The men, who broke furniture and mirrors in a downtown hotel, also apologized to the hotel administration, police said. (AP)

For the latest in medical news, read Sunday's SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY PAGE

by Judy Siegel-Itzkovitch

★ The Knesset's new internet site brings the House to your house

★ A new CD-ROM helps tourists love Israel and Hebrew even before they get here

★ A meteorologist explains how Europe has taken the wind out of our winter

★ A Golan wind farm is making waves

★ "Healthy" Israelis aren't in such great shape

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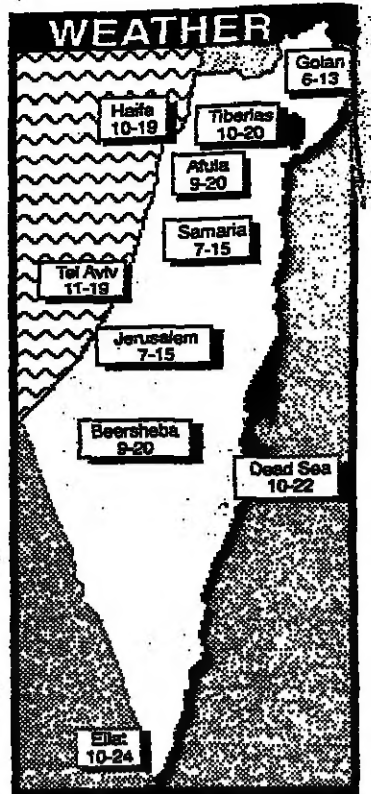
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AROUND THE WORLD

| | LOW | C | HIGH | WIND |
|--------------|-----|----|------|---------------|
| Amsterdam | -8 | 16 | 23 | cloudy |
| Berlin | -8 | 16 | 24 | cloudy |
| Buenos Aires | -16 | 16 | 21 | partly cloudy |
| Chicago | -16 | 16 | 21 | snow |
| Copenhagen | -16 | 16 | 21 | cloudy |
| Frankfurt | -16 | 16 | 21 | cloudy |
| Geneva | -16 | 16 | 21 | cloudy |
| Helsinki | -16 | 16 | 21 | cloudy |
| Hong Kong | 16 | 24 | 31 | clear |
| London | -16 | 16 | 21 | partly cloudy |
| Lisbon | -16 | 16 | 21 | snow |

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☐ Globes 1996 Fund Managers Rating: "The First International Bank won first place in the provident fund managers' three - year rating..."

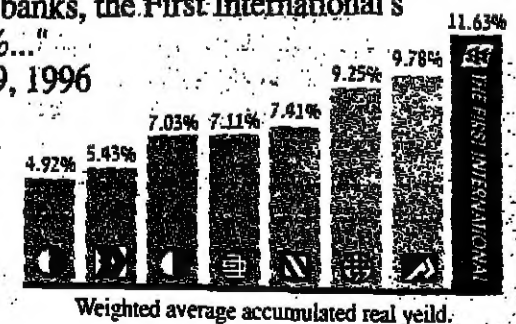
"Dikla Mutual Funds* of the First International group, which topped the ratings for the past two years, was once again designated as the outstanding manager in the three - year rating."

Globes, Business Newspaper, January 1, 1997

☐ "The First International Bank leads in Provident Fund performance. In a Five-year comparison of provident funds managed by the banks, the First International's funds showed a weighted cumulative of 11.63 %..."

Yediot Ahronot, Daily Newspaper, December 29, 1996

☐ A December 1996 comparison by Kranot Meida Zahav (fund rating company), concluded that the First International Bank topped the industry in provident fund yields for the past five years.



☐ According to a June 1996 report of the Israeli Finance Ministry's Director of Capital Markets Division, the '92-'95 performance of the First International Bank's provident funds, advanced education funds and severance pay funds was the best among the five leading banks.

☐ The First International is the only bank, among the five leading banks, that has won the Globes rating for three consecutive years - as the outstanding manager of both provident funds and mutual funds (three - year rating).

Many have already made the move to the First International Bank of Israel. Come and bank with us! Transfer your investments to First International Bank.

For full details contact any branch of First International Bank or Pagi Bank; or call FIBI CALL at (03) 519-6000

*Dikla Mutual Funds is a subsidiary of FIBI Holdings, First International Bank's parent company.

This advertisement is not an offer to purchase participation units in the funds described, and should not be considered as investment advice.